■ Sports
Pistons force sudden death in NBA Finals

■ Metro/A19
Police blame Santiago family for snail-paced probe

■ Business/B1
Peso steady at 55.645:$1; HSBC forecasts rebound

■ Sports
French Open champ exits Wimbledon

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Slicing into the pizza market

Nene wants Edsa show to go on, but lead actor is gone

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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SOME good tidings for a dire season. Robert Tarongoy, the government worker who endured and battled for 8 captivity for the past seven months, is free.

7-month ordeal over for Filipino hostage

By Christine O. Avendaño

ROBERT Tarongoy's seven-month ordeal ended yesterday when Iraqi militants released him from captivity in Iraq, it couldn't have come at a better time. Saturday was his third wedding anniversary.

Retired President Macapagal-Arroyo, on a visit to Cebu, announced the release.

"At long last, Robert Tarongoy is on his way home after having gone for a long time," Ms Arroyo announced after attending Mass at the Basilican Convent of Divine Grace.

The 35-year-old Tarongoy, an accountant who worked for a Saudi firm based in Baghdad, was seized from his workplace along with an American colleague in November last year. The fate of the 3rd national remains unknown.

Tarongoy was the third Filipino abducted and released in the Middle East. Driver Angelo de la Cruz was abducted in Fallujah on July 4 last year and was released on July 20. On Oct. 20 last year, diplomat Angelito Nuñez was seized in Afghanistan and was released less than a month later.

The President did not give any details of how Tarongoy got his freedom. She said Tarongoy was now in the custody of the government's Iraq

VIPs, plain folk mourn

Gloria, Noli join line to pay last respects to Cardinal Sin

THOUSANDS of Filipinos, led by a sad-eyed President Macapagal-Arroyo (right), file past the dark mahogany casket of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin at the Manila Cathedral yesterday. The cardinal's remains will lie in public view until Tuesday when he is to be given state honors before being interred at the cathedral's underground crypt.

By Jayanna Kristy and Christian V. Esguerra

MOURNERS in the thousands yesterday paid their respects to the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, the moving force of Edsa 1 and 2.

Busloads of students from Catholic schools, government workers and ordinary folk arrived in droves at the Manila Cathedral, where the body of the former archbishop of Manila lay in state to enable a day after he died at 76 from complications due to kidney problems and diabetes.

"Cardinal Sin is a monumental figure. He is an inspiration," said Rosalie Ruiz, a teacher who arrived with 6 high school students from the Catholic run Lourdes School. His death, though it makes Filipinos sad, can produce greater blessing because of his example."

On Thursday night, some estimates put the crowd at 30,000 people.

President Macapagal-Arroyo arrived with her younger son Mikoko at around 10.35 pm and immediately joined the queue to view the cardinal's remains.

She waited in line for her turn, accompanied by Vice President Noli de Castro who arrived about 15 minutes earlier, before taking a seat at the front pew.

She stayed seated for about 30 minutes, talking with Sin's relatives and officials of the Manila

The life and times of Jaime Cardinal Sin

THE TIMES were dynamic and heroic moments, the life of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin was no less so.

His birth and that of his living siblings preceded by parental grief, and growing to adulthood and the priestly life during World War II, he was tested by fire and emerged sharp, seen and outspoken, for a selfless if humor—and genius.

In the article "Grace in the Hands of God" (Gaudium magazine, Oct. 15, 1979), Abe Florendo wrote of disorder and early sorrow in the family living in the improbably named town of Sitio Washington in Iloilo:

"The mother's milk was poisonous...but the doctors didn't know it. Child after child died soon after birth. But the sorrowful and perplexed couple were enhanced, they kept on blessing themselves and believing.

"The irony of the mother's lifegiving breasts was discovered finally after the ninth child was born. With renewed enthusiasm they produced the seventh child, and the eighth, and so forth until the 13th child.

"The servants of the living did

down were on to become, in the profound sense God gained the devotion of men, a servant of His people and a prince of His Church, Jaime Cardinal L. Sin.

"Sir Ramon Sin, the cardinal's younger brother, chuckled when

More Pinoys rate selves as poor—SWS

By Cliff C. Cabucungan Jr., Christine O. Avendaño and Cornie E. Fernandez

MORE Filipino families are seeing themselves poor as high prices erode their incomes.

A survey by Social Weather Stations in May showed that 57 percent of Filipino households self-rated themselves as poor, significantly higher than the 46 percent in a survey done two months earlier.

The survey also showed that 12.4 percent of Filipinos reported going hungry but at least one day in the last three months, the fifth straight quarter since March 2004 that the level of hunger had reached the double-digit mark.

In a statement, SWS said that just like the flood crisis facing the government, a record 58 percent of Filipino households were spending more than what they were earning. Only 5.5 percent said they had a surplus while 36 percent said they had a balanced budget.

"Economic conditions for the people continue to be harsh."

Solons can't pin down Bunye on 'Hello Garci' tape

By Michael Lim Ubac

LAWMAKERS failed yesterday to elicit confirmation from Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye that a voice in a wiretap belongs to President Macapagal-Arroyo, but the opposition scored a break-through when the joint House committee inquiry agreed to raise custody of copies of the recording that could later be used as evidence.

Bunye continued his testimony on the second day of the committee-by-committee investigation called by Iloilo Rep. Augusto Syjuco Jr. into the authenticity of the wiretap recording that he cannot be sure that Ms Arroyo is the woman's voice in the audio recording's clips, identified by the opposition as former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, for a one-million vote

THE HOUSE hearing into the "Garcia gate" scandal is shown taking the testimony of Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye (foreground) just minutes before the chamber erupted in a shouting match after a legislator produced a copy of the tape and demanded that it be played.

Bro. Eddie asks GMA to quit, if she's the one on tape

By Tarra Y. Quismundo

AN EVANGELIST is seeking divine intervention to help the country survive a "crisis" triggered by the purported taped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and an election official shunting the fatal rigged in the May 2004 elections.

"If she was indeed the voice on the tape, I hope His Almighty would discern if she still has moral ascendancy to govern," said Bro. Eddie Villanueva, president of the Bangon Pilipinas Movement, who handed calls from his followers to cut short his trip to Israel and say his piece on current issues.

Only a leader who still has moral authority over the path he may save the nation from "the verge of collapse," Villanueva said at a press conference yesterday afternoon. Villanueva has the presidential race in May 2004 to Mr Arroyo.]

But Mr Arroyo earlier said that it was God who put her in Malacañang. "I wish to be reminded as the one who stands tough

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

SC junks Barbers' bid to unseat Biazon

BIAZON

BARBERS

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SUPREME Court yesterday threw out the petition of former Sen. Robert J. Barbers seeking to nullify a resolution of the Commission on Elections declaring Sen. Rodolfo G. Biazon as the duly elected 12th senator in the May 2004 elections.

The ruling came at a time when the Barbers-Biazon contest for the 12th spot figured in the allegedly wiretapped conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and an election official in the infamous "Chavit gate" tapes.

The high tribunal dismissed Barbers' petition on the ground that the Supreme Court was the wrong venue for the filing of the petition.

The SC said the dispute fell under the sole jurisdiction of the Senate Electoral Tribunal to act on, in the Constitution and the Revised Rules of the SET.

"For this court to take cognizance of the electoral protest against Biazon would usurp the constitutional functions of the SET," said the SC resolution penned by Associate Justice Antonio Carpio.

"The authority conferred upon the SET is categorical and complete. It is therefore clear that this court has no jurisdiction to entertain the instant petition," the high court said.

The SC also ruled that the Commission on Elections "did not commit any grave abuse of discretion in issuing the assailed resolution affirming Biazon's proclamation since the accusations against the validity of the election in Sulu could not materially affect the results of the elections."

In his petition, Barbers sought a temporary restraining and preliminary injunction to nullify the Comelec's July 8, 2004 resolution on the grounds that Biazon's proclamation was "illegal and premature being based on an incomplete canvass."

Biazon was against Barbers with a margin of 38,683 votes.

But Sen. argued that at the time the proclamation was made, the votes from key areas in Mindanao had not yet been canvassed and that there were special elections yet to be held in certain areas.

But the high court accepted the Comelec's arguments that by the time the proclamation was made, "the election returns not included in the national canvass as well as the results of the special elections to be held would not materially affect the results of the elections."

FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY
PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo toasts co-visiting Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono during a state dinner in Malacañang Palace Tuesday night.

Garci tapes proved poll fraud, says Namfrel exec

By Alcuin Papa

THE ALLEGED "Hello Garci" wiretapped conversation between President Macapagal-Arroyo and an election commissioner proved there was cheating in the 2004 elections, particularly in Lanao del Sur, a National Movement for Free Elections official claimed yesterday.

Rudy Rodolfo Dalidig, who headed the Namfrel chapter in Lanao del Sur, told a media forum yesterday that he discovered duplicitous (vote-padding and shaving) operations in at least five towns in the province which gave the President around 30,000 votes.

In a seven-statement distributed to journalists, Dalidig said the conversations in the tapes reflected the "true events" in the northern Mindanao province during the 2004 elections. "This people in government engaged in massive duplicitous (vote-padding) and shaving) operations in at least five towns in the province which gave the President around 30,000 votes.

For example, in the municipality of Buenavista, he said the cost/duties of canvass (COC) showed Mr. Arroyo getting 4,500 votes while all other presidential candidates got zero.

"But the truth is that all the other presidential candidates obtained votes, as proved by the affidavit Ms. given to Namfrel and which are still in my custody," Dalidig said.

He said he brought the issue to Namfrel chair Jose Concepcion and secretary-general Guillermo Luz. It is a June 1, 2004 report. He said he was believed him.

Dalidig claimed to have in his possession more than 1,000 out of the 1,500 election returns (ERs) from Lanao del Sur's voting precincts.

Dalidig also claimed that Mr. Arroyo's votes were allegedly padded in 5,525 in the municipality of Bayanan, 3,437 in Bacolodan, 3,062 in Tubaka, 2,877 in Nuro, and 3,434 in Balindong.

He said it was not true as Luz claimed that out of the 39 towns of Lanao del Sur, the provincial Namfrel only entered and got the election returns of 12 towns. Dalidig claimed to have surveyed the ERs of 36 towns.

But Luz countered that Dalidig "did not furnish the Namfrel with documents of canvass (COCs)." The COC is a summary of votes for all candidates cast in each precinct, city, or alternate voting center. *With reports from Artemio Dalog*

Investors relocating from China

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Alcuin Papa

FOREIGN investors have become ashamed by the Philippines' uncertain politics that they are pouring over the seven-day "honeymoon" the Arroyo administration and are now making our opportunities for business here, according to Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima.

Purisima, who addressed a Palace briefing yesterday, noted the decision of a number of major multinational corporations to bring back to the Philippines the factories that they had transferred to China a few years ago.

The finance secretary said this was "a very good development because for the longest time people have been worrying about our competitiveness vis-a-vis China."

"We look at this as a badge of honor of the improving fundamentals of the economy. We are now able to project the country as a suitable location for companies operating in China, that we can compete favorably with China with the quality of people and the quality of infrastructure," said Purisima.

He said the Department of Trade and Industry would announce the identities of the returning firms once their relocation plans are finalized.

Purisima said some multinationals are upset over the "politicking" now going on before the Philippine Supreme Court. Some have come to realize that in China, businessmen must look on the real picture not only at short-cost but at total labor outlay which includes social, expatriate living and private costs.

During President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent lunch meeting with Hong Kong business leaders last Monday, Purisima said he was told by one foreign investor that "the Philippines is not the Philippines without those political issues."

Another "top supporter" was a consumer by one of the guests: "Tell us a democracy where the opposition is not trying to unseat the administration. The opposition will always want to be in control. (The Philippines) is just more vibrant in that."

"They are more more familiar with the type of business we the Philippines has. They know it is an active and democratic-type of politics from an image standpoint," Purisima said.

Foreign investors have also come to realize from realizers the Philippine economy has been through all the turmoil in its history, the Finance secretary said.

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Sedition raps vs Abat et al. filed

By Armand N. Nocum

A CASE of inciting to sedition were filed yesterday by two lawyers against retired Maj. Gen. Potenciano Abat, former Budget Secretary Salvador Enriquez and several others in connection with their alleged call to overthrow the government.

Lawyers Romeo Ipot, president of the integrated bar of the Philippines Manila Chapter, and Ariel Joseph Arias, president of the Ortigas Jr. of the Bar Association, said they filed the case to stop any destabilization effort.

They said they thought that the Abat group did them in file the case.

"Military headmen yung Mahawlang dito (Mobilizing has nothing to do with this). It's the mandate of the lawyers," said Marcial Magsino, who accompanied the two to the Department of Justice.

The three stopped by the office of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez before they filed the complaint with a prosecutor at the DOJ.

Other respondents in the complaint were retired Commodore Ismael Ignacio, a certain John Medina, a certain Rene Tiongson, Lito Ledesma Bautista and several unnamed others.

The two lawyers' complaint stemmed from the April 20 press conference called by Abat and other respondents at Club Filipino, where the retired general said he met defense secretary Angelo Reyes and asked him to submit category "several notifications to which category" to the public peace."

They said Abat also called for the abolition of Congress and the establishment of a "revolutionary transition government to replace the present administration.

Gambia offers oil field to RP

By Miko Dizon

BUDDHISTS for past hours, Gambian President Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh has offered for lease some blocks of oil reserves for exploration by the Philippine government, Gambia's foreign minister said yesterday.

"He is offering one block out of the five blocks in the government of the Philippines for exploration," Foreign Minister Musa G. Bala Gaye told the reporters in an interview.

Bala Gaye explained that the Philippine government need not go into tender, bid, or compete with other companies.

"He offered it for free and directly to the government of the Philippines for oil exploration," he said.

Gambia discovered its onshore and offshore oil deposits last year.

Bala Gaye said he could not provide technical details about the oil reserve.

However, he said that five blocks have been tendered internationally to interested oil companies. The tender period has been extended up to mid-July this year.

Bala Gaye said that President Jammeh's offer for was in exchange for the Philippines' own act of generosity several years ago when the Gambia attained its independence.

The Philippine government then, Bala Gaye said, gave a personal money that eventually became Gambia's trade export crop. The peanut was later known as "Philippine pink."

"It was from which we run our country at the time when the British and Gambia was not a viable economy," Bala Gaye said.

Jammeh and Ed Macalalad, president of the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC), were scheduled to meet last night at a dinner tendered by Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla to discuss preparations for the oil exploration.

In an earlier statement, President Arroyo hailed Jammeh's visit as "historic" as it came at a time when world attention was focused on Africa.

Aside from joint oil exploration, Bala Gaye said Gambia is also interested in Philippine agricultural products.

He added that Jammeh was "very much impressed" with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) that the Gambian government is considering to set up a similar agency in it. *With Rigor*

Angara wants Senate to end 'jueteng' probe

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

TWO days before the Senate is to resume its investigation into the jueteng pay-offs scandal, an opposition senator urged the chamber to end the probe.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said the Senate should "stop acting as prosecutor and turn over to the Ombudsman the pieces of evidence it had gathered."

ANGARA

Angara said that unlike the controversial wiretapped conversations involving President Macapagal-Arroyo and an election commissioner that must be resolved by an independent body, the jueteng pay-offs scandal must undergo due process with the proper courts.

Angara echoed the opinion of administration senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Richard Gordon who earlier questioned whether the Senate was the proper forum for investigating the criminal liability of officials and private individuals allegedly involved in the operations and protection of the illegal numbers game.

Several senators also support the view of former Senate President Jovito Salonga that the Senate should observe tighter rules, including the holding of executive or closed-door hearings first to validate the testimonies of witnesses.

Following a two-week break, the Senate committees on public order and on games will resume tomorrow the hearings into the proliferation of jueteng and their alleged protectors in government.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz, the anti-jueteng crusader who set off the jueteng probe, said at least two witnesses who would implicate some influential personalities are set to appear tomorrow.

Four witnesses that Cruz had presented in previous hearings implicated the President's husband Jose Miguel "Mike," as well as her son Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and brother-in-law Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo as alleged beneficiaries of jueteng bribes.

Jueteng bagwoman Sandra Cam, who confessed to collecting jueteng payola for Chief Supt. Restituto Mosqueda, the then police chief of Bicol, said she personally delivered P900,000 to Mikey and Iggy Arroyo at the House of Representatives in December 2004.

But a man who identified himself as a cousin of jueteng operator Charing Magbuhos told the Senate hearings in an affidavit that Magbuhos had denied that Cam had ever collected jueteng money for the Arroyos.

Rudy Magbuhos said in his affidavit that Cam was a "jueteng trustee" of Charing Magbuhos.

Pinay maid's rapist gets 5-yr jail term

HONG KONG—A former goalkeeper on the Hong Kong national soccer team received a five-year jail sentence Wednesday for raping his Filipino maid.

A court convicted Lau Tung-ping of raping the 25-year-old woman at his home, local television network TVB reported. Judge Pang Kin-kee of Hong Kong's High Court handed down a five-year prison term Wednesday, judiciary spokesman Mackenzie Mak said.

Lau was accused of raping his maid six times in May 2002, local media reported earlier.

Government-owned radio RTHK quoted the judge as saying that he cut the sentence short by one year because of Lau's contribution to Hong Kong's soccer team.

AP

Filipino clients join world's top advertisers

THE PHILIPPINES was represented by its first set of clients during the week-long Cannes Lions festival. Pauline Lao of P&G Philippines and Jun Vivar of United Laboratories joined other delegates from 120 major global companies like BMW, Cathay Pacific, Coca-Cola, Diageo, FedEx, Ford, General Motors, HSBC, Kodak, McDonalds, Nestle, P&G, Samsung, Sony and Volkswagen.

The support from these top advertisers is expected to foster stronger client-agency partnerships that would bring more creative ad campaigns from these companies.

P&G Worldwide submitted more than 200 entries to this year's festival, a record number for the giant marketer. Two years ago, P&G made known of their commitment to "make better work," according to P&G's global marketing officer Jim Stengal.

The winners in the Media Lions category were announced last night during a ceremony held at the Palais des Festivals. The Media Lions award honors excellence in media strategy, planning and execution. Of the 1076 entries from 56 countries only 20 Lions were awarded.

Starcom Worldwide Philippines' entry for P&G Philippines, the Rejoice Reviving Shampoo "Song and Dance" campaign, made the shortlist in two categories, Best Use of Mixed Media and Best Use of TV. "Shortlists are winners as well" says Mark Stewart, Media jury president and managing director of OMD, Eastern Region in a press conference yesterday.

The media campaign for Rejoice Reviving Shampoo took the brand to its highest market share ever. It surpassed the market leader in top-of-mind awareness and the company achieved a substantial return on investment.

More Pinoys rate selves as poor–SWS

From page A1

SWS said in its latest survey in the second quarter when all prices were increasing every week and inflation increased substantially.

Wednesday hammered the worsening situation of Filipino families and it was quite fortuitous that the divisive politics for delaying its social programs aimed at alleviating the plight of the poor.

"Sira 'to kawawahin," said Sen. Edgardo Angara, referring to Senator Edwardo Enrile's stance as a press hardship, referring to the lot of Filipino families.

Enrile said this was the reason President Macapagal-Arroyo had exercised to focus on her program agenda instead of getting sidetracked by issues raised by the opposition to smear her three years.

Difficult times

In Cebu City, Ms. Arroyo urged the people to save the republic by casting both her votes to add to only the "difficult times" that lie ahead.

The President said her economic reforms and soaring oil prices were among the "daunting" challenges the country was facing.

Noting that high oil prices had more impact on the poor, the President said she had instructed Trade Secretary Juan Ponce to be on the top of pacing in place calling for help.

In her keynote speech to the 5th International Conference and Exhibition on Business and Information and Communications Technology, Ms. Arroyo said the "oil shock" was a matter of history of survival."

In the self-rated poverty survey, **20% said their households in Metro Manila** that believed they were poor rose to most 20 percent.

The polling group said Filipino households acknowledging that they were poor rose across the board...33 percent in the rest of Luzon, 70 percent in the Visayas, and 53 percent in Mindanao.

Monthly income

To escape poverty, the respondents said they needed a monthly income of P10,000 in Metro Manila, P7,000 in the rest of Luzon, P6,000 in the Visayas and P5,000 in Mindanao.

"That's money-value threshold is more already reached as early as five years ago, even though the cost of living now greatly every year. The holders of the thresholds to increase despite no much inflation is a sign that the poor are actually lowering their real living standards," Ms.SWS said.

SWS said that while the individuals of hunger dropped slightly from 15 percent in March to 12 percent in May, the figure remained significant as it was equivalent to 3 million households in the country.

The incidence of hunger dropped in Mindanao (5.3 percent in May from 14.3 percent in March) which offset the rise in Metro Manila (from 7.7 percent in March to 12 percent in May) and the rest of Luzon (from 13.7 percent in March to 16 percent in May). The incidence of hunger was unchanged at 13.7 percent in the Visayas.

The SWS survey also noted an increase in the number of Filipino households experiencing severe hunger or those who went hungry often or always in the last three months. Their number climbed to 2.9 percent in May from 2.5 percent in March.

In her speech, the President said it was important that she had a conversation with business movers and shakers on the "good news" about the economy and the political environment.

Good news

"Because politics affects markets and investment decisions," she said. "I've been on a mission, actually."

Ms. Arroyo claimed her multi-year effort at one point she pounded her hand on the podium several times to elucidate her call for unity in the country.

"We've keeping the nation divided for political purposes," she said. "We cannot make it work anymore. We cannot put a stop to it."

Reiterating her desire for burying "any Philippines," she said she intended to achieve this by "breaking the cycle of distrust, democratic politics, not enemies, and a backbiting political environment which perpetuates the status quo."

"It is no coincidence that my opponents came after me within days of completion of the first phase of our economic reforms and tuition loans of our words saying realized upgrade," she said, "It's an age-old game in the Philippines."

On ICT, she stress said 54,000 jobs that were created since 2001. This year alone, 40,000 jobs had been generated.

"Much of this is due to the measures we built over the last two years ... now we have a total of 151,000 jobs in this sector, half the way is not yet done, more than to our target of 120,000," she added.

She also pointed out that there were 30,000 software developers in the country and she would increase to 100,000 by end of her to in to 2010.

FRANK, LIWAY, GERRY: MAY I SAY SOMETHING?

I disagree with all those who say that President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo must explain now and for all if the wire illegally taped is her own voice, that "silence is an acceptance of guilt," or for whatever other reason others may give.

It is clear to me that all this is part of a destabilization effort to topple the government. I am convinced that there is a concerted effort to bring her government down. There is just no two ways about it.

The timing is suspect, to start with.

I will not try to argue with the Senate investigation on the jueteng tax refund that jueteng has been a menace that has led to the impoverishment of our people in the past one hundred years. But the appearance of Atty. Frank Chavez, a known PIATCO lawyer, now a counsel to Sandra Cam, followed by the San Carlos Seminary incident immediately after the Senate went on a recess, is good enough that the destabilization effort against this administration was all intended to bring it to a boiling point.

Why do I say this?

Is it only mere coincidence that PIATCO's thumbprints were clearly stained in the San Carlos Seminary incident and in the Senate jueteng investigation?

Consider the appearances of the following personalities:

Former Bill Commissioner Lauganay Vicente Cloete, now swearing for Atty. Samuel Ong is a known PIATCO lawyer. And so is Frank Chavez.

What made things even more clear in the San PIATCO may have had a hand in the appearance of Mr. Garry Lichauco who in fact is a known publicist and Manager of MAA 2 by PIATCO who, too, has an ax to grind against this administration for endangering his position – if he has not lost it.

What can one say about these people in light of recent events? There must be more than meets the eye in the current scenario.

I beg those people who are all known to me and have been my friends for an explanation just as the opposition inside for the President to break his silence and explain.

When it comes to La Palma, it behooves us all to safeguard the interest and stability of the nation above all.

It is easy to say that the President must break her silence. But first things first. She was not the one who violated the anti-wiretapping law. The one(s) who committed the crime must first be investigated and the crime must be established: the authentication of the tape or tapes must follow, not on the say-so of an American company or Australian company for not all "blue reads" are good, perfect, experts, all knowing and accurate.

The statements made by Mr. Ali Sahel that he had sent the tape for "authentication" to a company in New Jersey leaves me cold. And the same goes for the one from Queensland, Australia.

What we need to do is to get hold of the "Mother of all tapes" being handled around by Atty. Samuel Ong.

So many versions have appeared which have left the public more confused. I agree with President Gloria's statement not to dignify an illegal act, and rightfully so for at this point, we do not know which one of them is the "real McCoy."

I agree with Congressman Salacob Bolinao's statement on "Deep Purse Line" about it's "political implication" should the President prematurely say anything. This dimension must be considered for indeed the issue has reached the point that for the President to admit what has been presented so far is still too premature to do anything about it one way or the other.

What is most disappointing to me about others may not discern the same way is the PIATCO angle. Just when this whole mess project is about to be settled amicably as it was often announced, those incidents suddenly occurred. The arbitration is also expected to take place in Washington D.C. next month.

Can big business in this country disguise itself like a chameleon to put the government down for self-interest and for the interest of a few – including its foreign components? Do foreign interests in this controversial airport have a hand in it? Most we allow ourselves to be used by foreign vested interests to bring this country down to its knees? The possibility cannot be far-fetched for in this country, money talks.

Does the PIATCO conglomerate have a pact with the opposition to topple the government to get the airport back into their hands? Is this destabilization effort the easier solution to the pending PIATCO issue? Are those among the opposition senators and congressmen are sympathetic to PIATCO's great fortune?

So many questions remain to be answered for this operation if it seems, was meant to be subtle but had suddenly become more screaming.

As far as I know, the Supreme Court decided on the PIATCO case, not the Executive Department. One need not be a lawyer to see the hands of the Supreme Court's decision. It is said that no less than 15 provisions have been added to the original contract after it had been officially signed which ultimately altered the contract and made it disadvantageous to the government. Like the lapse, this contract was also tampered with.

The allegations were done by the past administration. How many of that administration had benefited from it? Maybe enough to fight to re-possess it? Enough to even topple the present government?

Suddenly, so many are now mouthing "to tell the truth", that "truth will set us free" and all that garbage as if we do not know that these personalities are mouthing these lines were themselves liars once upon a time.

Who can forget Ed Tabel's announcement of Martial Law on Television? I have not. Ramon Revilla's inappropriate behavior on his Senate secretary is not yet close to us to this day. Had Pope John Paul II defrocked him or forgiven him? Is he still a "man of the cloth"?

If I were in the President's shoes, I'd make all this charade's explain to the Filipino people. She could tell them: "Tatay Ilalong Hagupitkaming sa Langitpaano kung gusto ninyong ariinin ko na kaso ko nga ang mas tapos." And there are so many others on the same boat, behind it or not.

Director Raymundo Wycoco said something on "On Line" of Gloria Dreyfus which I also had in mind but was unable to express ahead of him. But I will give him the credit for saying it ahead of me.

For the uninformed, I wish they would take note of Natalie Cole's video recording with her already dead father, Nat King Cole. And Mohammad Ali's video showing him in a boxing bout with Rocky Marciano who'd been long dead. Modern technology was able to blend the dead with the living in such a way as if they did it yesterday. Can anyone say that there's nothing on those tapes by examining the final and finished product? Can you detect, audio-visually, that Natalie and her father were not singing together or that Ali was not fighting Rocky Marciano? Even Disney films can produce marvelous computer graphics to suggest that lions are not natural enemies, angels with (Sand's voice and whoever you wish to pair him with is easier to do. Even sexual acts can be made between two strangers without them knowing what will appear in the edited copy.

In this manner, the voices in the "Mother of all tapes" of Atty. Ong can also easily be done.

Again, if I were the President, will I bother to admit the voice-chan now? Why upset the bar? Seldom does one get the distinct honor of having the most popular mayhem. It's over and it's lots of fun to keep it. It gives one a good laugh whenever I need it. It does not offend at all. Remember, laughter is the best medicine. We must learn to laugh more.

The opposition side are always frowning.

It is my sincere wish to see our people laugh more instead of showing anger and hatred.

There was one incident in the San Carlos Seminary that gave me a good laugh. And I hope you'd laugh with me. I am referring to what Atty. Luis Sison, one of Atty. Samuel Ong's lawyers, said on ANC. Louie is a friend, but was it right for him to say that Antonio Zobel was "the first wife of 1Sgt. Vidal Dalisi"? There was malice in it because of the reputation that Vidal Dalisi had other "wives" aside from Antonio?

Layne, allow me to tell you that the "first wife" is always the wife minus the marriages to annulled. The second, third or fourth are our "wives". The fact that 1Sgt. Vidal Dalisi wanted to be with his "first" wife and their two children proved that Antonio is the real wife. If he has others, it is Louie's job to present them to us (as if we even care) can be his wives as one if "this is his "first".

There were no less than five presidential candidates in the 2004 elections. As I know it, the other four were the ones not to defeat candidate Fernando Poe Jr. by hook or by crook. Propaganda is the only thing bothering candidate. Keep his eye-to-eye than aside from the fact that she was the most prepared to take the helm.

To blame candidate Arroyo of cheating the other four men to win is a bit beyond my imagination. Could it be the other way around? Or the four male candidates who ended up dragging each other? Baka may isang walang-candidate na dinaya din si FPJ. Who knows? They were all fighting to get out, so we can surmise that they all tried to outdo each other.

A close fight normally brings excitement. The votes in the elections of 2004 with no less than five presidential candidates were fragmented which favored the incumbent. All the surveys showed President Gloria was leading by more than a million votes, including that of SWS of FPJ's cousin Mahar Mangudadatu. It is but natural for President Gloria to expect that result which eventually happened.

The fight between Bosco and Barbers was so close at only 10,000 votes from each other. In the last presidential elections in Taiwan last year, the incumbent president won by only 30 votes. So, it also happens in other places, including in Florida in 2000 that caused a more bitter fight between the two most powerful presidential candidates in the world. But both honored and respected the decision of their highest court.

Bakeng nyakaren na, mom po, na si "Gerry" (kung siya man 'yon) ay nagdalo sa lahat at nanonood pa sa dalawang ring, ito ngo. Ito what my former classmate Christian Monsod said on TV, "Gerry" was known for that.

Kung tumotoo man na denahog sa anak na niyak na boses si "Gerry" ako man ang Presidente. Hi chard on him ton si baka ako na ang kaysan mga. Kinabahan na rin siguro si Presidente Gloria.

President Nixon's Watergate is completely the opposite of what Atty. Samuel Ong would want us to believe. It's Ong who probably took the place of Nixon, not President Gloria.

In Nixon's case, it was he who was found guilty of violating the anti-wiretapping law. Si President Nixon ang nagpa-wiretap. Siya ang nag-utos at siya ang nasita sa puwesto.

Mayroong maguro ang nangyayari sa ating ngayon. This so-called "battle of perception" regarding a certain tape or tapes is on the grind. The strategy of the opposition is to "let the people judge". But how can the people judge intelligently when the idea of the opposition is to deceive them?

The opposition wants us to believe that the supporters of President Gloria morphed her face in the vast electorate as if the leaders and supporters of the other candidates did not resort to the same practice.

We have to accept certain hard realities – that cheating and vote-buying do occur in Philippine elections. As to their magnitude, I do not exactly know. But otherwise, many of our senators and congressmen won't be sitting in the Senate and Congress today. It is not the candidates themselves who cheat but their leaders, followers and handlers.

I would like to thank Susan, an old and dear friend since our younger days for not allowing herself to be used. In these times of great difficulties and crises, we could have been thrown to the winds together with all of us. Knowing Ronnie, he would not have desired it either. And who got involved with gerry defeating for Mayor?

I chaperoned Susan when she was still single. Ronnie was my compadre and his mother, Beauty, my comadre.

Susan, I thank you and Ronnie for coming to my private chapel in my residence the day Ronnie declared his candidacy in Manila. Initial and his running again on May 9, the day before election day. But forgive me for not being able to personally attend to both of you anymore but it was not proper for me to do so. Imagine if I had we been seen together just hours before the polls opened. What would people say? That I turned my back on candidate Gloria at the last minute? It could have sent the wrong signal and I am not one to do that.

I want everybody to know that I will forever be grateful to Ronnie and Susan for not resenting the fact that I supported President Gloria. Despite and in spite of knowing that I was for President Gloria and VP Noli de Castro, our friendship continued. Ronnie, the candidate, never showed hurt feelings towards me. We related with each other as if nothing was happening between us.

May God keep Ronnie in his keeping forever and ever.

And to Frank, Liway and Gerry, please bear in mind that although we've been friends for quite a long time, there comes a time when love of country must come first above all.

That "Mother of all tapes" took long in the making. Why was it brought out only now – after a year?

I cannot in conscience easily fall for it. I know that King Cole's bear with his daughter, Natalie, done long after his death took less than a month to produce. And so with Muhammad Ali's bout with Rocky Marciano.

I handled the first industry for six long years as MTRCB Chairman. Thus, I know enough about the tricks they use.

I am not defending President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. What I am saying is in defense of my own sensibilities and this way I see things. I always look at things as they are, but so what others would like me to believe.

I have my own mind to protect. And I speak out what I feel. No one can tell me to jump in the lake when I don't feel like doing it. Never. That's how I've kept the sanity intact.

To Frank, Liway and Gerry, please just tell us what's going on for I cannot believe that all this money happened by chance. I am old enough to be taken for a ride.

And if we have to end our friendship because of this, so be it.

My stand will always be for country and people. Anyone who tries to stand in between can forget me.

Pinikpik and sisi-gue mat accompanies.

Warm regards,

MANUEL L. MONATO

ADS

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra

PISTONS' Chauncey Billups goes to the hoop as Richard Hamilton (left) and Spurs' Tim Duncan watch during Game 6. AP

NBA FINALS

Pistons force do-or-die

SAN ANTONIO—As they have so many times before, the Detroit Pistons fought off elimination once again in Game Six of the NBA Finals on Tuesday.

Rasheed Wallace scored 23 points and Chauncey Billups added 21 as the defending NBA champion forced a Game Seven in the championship series with a 95-86 win over the host Antonio Spurs.

Detroit is a remarkable 5-0 in games where facing playoff elimination in the past two years and the Pistons will face a sixth must-win game when the series wraps up at the SBC Center Thursday.

This year's Finals are the first since 1964 to require a full seven of games, a surprise for many as the Pistons had lost their last 10 moments in San Antonio heading into Game Six, including two lopsided defeats in the opening two games of this series.

NBA champions in 1999 and 2003, the Spurs were also 46-5 in all games at home this season before the Pistons added an extra number to the loss column.

"I've been with these guys for two years and they don't disappoint me in terms of their desire to withstand their respect for each other," Detroit coach Larry Brown said after winning his 130th career playoff win.

"This is what our team is about. We are one, selves in that position [facing elimination] and we don't give ourselves any other choice but to come out and compete as hard as we can."

The Pistons did that on Tuesday, taking the game away from the Spurs in the final quarter, and once again dousing the remarkable stallions they have displayed in the past two post-seasons.

"We're on tough on tools," Billups said. "We always make it tough on ourselves but we find a way to get out of that tea-hole."

It was a dramatic game which featured 23 lead changes and seven ties in the first three quarters.

However, Detroit, edged 77-67 ahead with a quarter remaining and never surrendered the lead again, although the Spurs did get to within one point.

"That's why they're the NBA champs, you expect them to do this," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said.

To repeat as champions and deny the Spurs a home-court celebration of their third NBA title in seven years, Detroit will have to do something they've never had ever done—win the last two games of the Finals series on the road after trailing 3-2.

A sign in the Pistons locker room read "San Antonio's parade is scheduled for Thursday" and that summed it up pretty well. Already two-time champions even more.

"We can fight any side," Rasheed Wallace said.

"You know, a lot of people thought we were going to be our tonight, but—they had their crowd really and all that stuff, but—boy, we're going to pop it Thursday."

As for the Spurs, they just feel they can still get it done on their home court with another chance.

"You play all year for a Game Seven at home," Tim Duncan, who had 21 points and 11 rebounds, said.

"We just have to come in here on Thursday and get it done."

Reuters

Barako rally from 21 down, nip Beermen to level series

By Jove Mercurio

GAME 3 TOMORROW: Crumb Ashabond
(Game 1 best-of-five semifinal series)
4:45 p.m.—Shell vs. Talk N Text
7:30 p.m.—Red Bull Barako vs. San Miguel Beer

WELCOM Ampatuan's three-point play keyed Red Bull's rise from the grave as the Barako wrapped the San Miguel Beermen, 79-77, last night to even up their Crispa Metaplex PBA Open Conference semifinal series at the Araneta Coliseum.

Ampatuan got a level from Earl Barrow at the baseline and completed a three-point play off Nic Belasco at Red Bull 3-tally took the lead at 78-77 after trailing by as many as 21 points, 69-57, in the third quarter.

The Beermen had the chance to secure the outcome twice, but Jondali Ikaditrowe fumbled on a drive while Chris Ronjosa missing a game-winning triple in the buzzer.

"I don't know how many of those we can pull off," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao, more than a week after the Barako overhauled a 27-point deficit to eliminate defending champion Sarangay Ginebra in the wildcard phase.

"But I don't want to be in tight situations in the future because sooner or later, our luck will definitely run out," added Guiao.

The Barako actually threw three off her three throws in the closing seconds but back-ups rode them as they used the last of five serves at 1-1.

Trailing 58-37 following a technical foul on Jumby Valenzuela, the Barako worked their way up with Earl Barrow, Cyrus Baguio, Jaycee Torres and Ampatuan by Time Ji Hsiu missing 1 point 3, setting.

The Barako dropped the deficit once half of the end of the third, 61-50, and as Hontiveros and Glenn Rancilio began swapping fouls after, they started building down San Miguel's shooters while aggressively attacking the basket through fast break plays.

"We just experimented on a lot of things tonight and the gamble paid off," said Guiao. "We did things that we're not used to doing in the past."

Meanwhile, Talk N' Text looked shy Tigkahoon yesterday hated that the Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice have given Red Ali Madrigal the go-signal to continue playing with Tx-T.

The scores:

RED BULL 79—Barrow 27, Baguio 13, Baguio 6, Torres 8, Villamor 2, Valenzuela 2, Ado 6, Ampatuan 7, Ignacio, Pinuela 2, Pedroso 12, Mercado 5.

SAN MIGUEL 77—Ronjosa 25, Hontiveros 16, Belasco 8, Intal 8, Ong 8, Ilaw 8, Mallonga 7, Lopez 5, Arimborgo.

Quarters: 16-32, 30-50, 50-61, 79-77.

ROJANE WILLIAMS of Shell (left) and defenders Mark Telan in their game last night. —PHOTO

Alvarez leads rookie derby

HERE'S bad news for James Yap, Purefoods could not wait to get signed.

Shell's Rich Alvarez, Sagittarius steal, emerged as possessor in the heated statistical race for the 2005 PBA Rookie of the Year award.

The 6'6 center-cum-elbow forward by Shell Mag-gains recently released the top 10 candidates for the ROY which is given annually by the pro league.

Included in the race were the numbers piled up by Alvarez during the 2004 Philippine Cup, 2004 Fiesta Conference and the ongoing Coca Manalac Fiesta Conference.

While the 6-foot 2 former Far Eastern University MVP doing heavy-tonnage, the Purefoods gun beat the bookings in the best-of-three series for a place in the semifinals.

Known for his off-ground plays, Alvarez has a league-leading 11.19 rebound point average, modern aside Yap in second spot with 9.06. Third player is rookie's Jonathan Fernandez (8.00), Purefoods' Brad Arlnds (7.90), and Sandiel de Ocampo (6.81) of Pedlia.

"Shell's coaching delight," said Shell coach Leo Austria, a former PBA rookie of the year awardee.

In the MVP race, Mark Cagunas of Big Chunks is leading the field over teammate Jack Meeds. But Meeds may not make it due to questions on his citizenship.

In last season's Willie Miller of Talk N' Text, with 17.04 normalized points. Cagunas gulped 16.02, followed by Meeds with 15.24 points.

Aside from statistics, voting from players, the media, and the Commissioner's Office will be used to determine the MVP and ROY, who will be found during the finals of the ongoing Fiesta Conference.

Antonio Rivas

Lito cautions Buddy on his ties with PBF

PHILIPPINE Basketball Association board member Leo Alvarez of the 22, which starts the Welfa Express franchise, cautioned league chair Buddy Encarnado on his involvement with the PBF as the board has yet to tackle the matter in its regular board meeting set Monday, June 27.

Encarnado, however, explained that he will be presiding over the said election to avoid any "conflict of interest."

Alvarez stressed that as discussed with chair Encarnado and commissioner Noli Eala, the PBA board will reorganize the NBA with the BAP and Lyceum to keep it binding as long as the PBA recognizes the BAP as the sole governing body for basketball in the Philippines.

"I'm just reminding Mr. Encarnado lar, cause it could be a big deal and he may be questioned by the board on the governance issue he could be pronouncing the board decision," Alvarez explained.

With the MOA, the PBA will continue the feud task on the formation of the national team in each major international event like the Asian Cup and the Fiba Asia Championships.

The PBF plans to take over as the governing body for basketball in the country after the BAP was suspended by the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Officials of the Philippine Basketball League, the Chiefs' Sr. Zed and other private groups are behind the formation of the PBF.

New cage body election today

THE NEW cage body set to take over the suspended Basketball Association of the Philippines will hold its election of officers today with former PBA coach Chito Narvasa as the strongest candidate for the presidency.

The election is set at Narvasa's office at the Tektite Towers on Pasig at 1 p.m.

The new body will go by the name of the Philippine Basketball Federation Inc. its constitution and by-laws were drafted by a special committee shortly after the suspension of the BAP by the Philippine Olympic Committee.

All the major stakeholders in the sport, including the professional PBA and collegiate leagues UAAP and NCAA, will be represented. The Philippine Basketball League and the Mile-IDOT Cement will also be there.

Bernardita, the spokesperson of POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, answered text messages from the sources and said that he is not a candidate, while Narvasa said that "everyone in the group is capable."

"Sinuy akong mag-ambisyon ng ganyan," Narvasa said over the phone. "Pero kung gano'n sila eh! (I did not aspire for the position but if they insist and I will make myself available."

Despite the POC suspension, the BBF was able to send a national team coached by Pinagmood Valle to the 21st Fiba Asia women's basketball championship in China. Winning 8 Gamilla

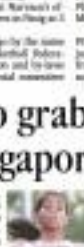
Gabito grabs gold in Singapore meet

LUZIAM, Indonesia—Gabito took over as weekend's long jump champion as time and leg of the Asian Athletics Grand Prix in Singapore over as Henry Ingrid settled for the silver medal in the men's long jump recently.

Indonesia—Gabito cleared 8.32 meters to win the meet event follow Filipina Mercedita Nerves dominated in the long jump in Surabaya, Indonesia. Ervo was third. He time with a jump of 6.41 behind an Orlach bet, who did 6.46.

Dagpil surpassed his 7.96-meter effort in Indonesia that was good for a silver but by 7.7% performance gave him a bronze medal behind the Indian gold winner (7.99) and the Chinese one, not up 0.7 800.

The SP board is not also supported by the Fear Southeast Foundation, Pagcor and San Miguel Corp. Mary Anthony Rivers



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VIPs, plain folk mourn

Transcription #1

archdiocese.

Roman Bishop Socrates Villegas, a former auxiliary bishop of Lingayen-Dagupan and an ordinary of Iloilo, presided the mass top officials.

Before leaving, the Black-clad President spared Iloilo time to view Gic's remains.

Neither she nor Dr. Cortes signed the condolence book, so to speak a statement.

Earlier, former President Fidel Ramos arrived to express his fondness to condolences.

Ramos said in an outreach interview that Gic was "irreplaceable" and a "unique Filipino."

Applause

"Here his legacy remain with us Filipinos for all time," Ramos said.

At the 7 p.m. Mass on Tuesday, the main celebrant, Bishop Deogracias Gutierrez of Manbel in Costabato, celebrated the assembly to give thanks for Gic's three decades service as Manila archbishop.

The assembly responded with applause that lasted for about a minute.

It was after the Mass that people in the middles of life, including street vendors, socialites, stars, priests and seminarians, were seamen, began arriving.

Among the members was the secretary Against Crime and Corruption (Acad), Associate Prinsipe, known among anti-crime crusaders as "Attorney Rina" for securing death sentences for a number of people charged with heinous crimes.

Asked about his profound priority stated vis-a-vis Gic and the Catholic Church's public advocacy, Principe said: "I came to express my gratitude to him and to honor his great legacy as the major instrument of the restoration of democracy in the country."

Principe also said he and other residents of Bulacan were among those who benefited Gic's radio message in February 1986 for the faithful to support what came to be known as Edsa I.

Privately buried

He is to be buried on Tuesday at the Manila Cathedral crypt, where other archbishops, including his immediate predecessor, Rufino Cardinal Santos, are interred.

A home drawn carriage bearing his dark mahogany casket will lead a procession around the cathedral, highlighting a ceremony fit for a prince of the Church, complete with bell tones and military honors including a 21 gun salute.

Fr. Rufino Gutierrez, Gic's private secretary for seven years, said the President would lead the mass homily at the cathedral steps.

Bishop Villegas is supposed to deliver the homily.

Gic's successor, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, Papal Nuncio Antonio Franco, Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, and Lingayen Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, will each deliver a message.

"We will make this last tribute to Gic" Rosses said, adding that the cardinal expressed this wish otherwise on TV. The interment of Pope John Paul II in April.

Ten ministers an orderly ceremony, representatives will file onto 150 people in the crypt, Rosses said.

Symbols

According to Rosses, his personally threw his burial place—the spot beside that of Manila Archbishop Gabriel Reyes.

The cardinal will be buried with all the important symbols of his priestly life.

His body is garbed in a red cassock and sash—the basic uniform of cardinals—along with an alb, personal cross and stole, as well as a quiet chasuble given to him by Pope John Paul II and a gold crimped miter, another gift from Rome.

A staff bearing his "servant" logo, the first he received when he was ordained bishop in Jaro, Iloilo, is at the casket. But Rosses said it would likely be transferred to a museum before the burial.

"This is his original staff," Rosses said. "He prefered this one from all he received so many other staffs."

Rosses said organizers were considering putting a "time capsule" summarizing Gic's life inside the casket.

The last important items that the will bring to the afterlife are a rosary, a symbol of his intense Marian devotion, and his bishop's ring, With an 18" carat

The life and times of Jaime Cardinal Sin

Transcription #1

told how Cardinal Sin drew the mother's milk as "poisonous." "That's what one says 1,001 in," he said.

"There was a set of twins, named Pocoma and Dupocoma, who also died as babies.

"So you see, once," says Cardinal Sin, "I drank the equivalent of the mother's milk, "we were all brought up (on) formation milk ...That is a promotion!"

He follows the rally with a laugh, childishly clapping one hand on the other, a characteristic way of his.

Ugly but loved

Homilies were also many-eyed but unsalting how he was "really ugly" as his mother among her nine living children.

"First, fumbling: 'Because I was the ugliest among them I was entrusted (to) me, to it not (to) others. Because very ugly, very ugly child and he is all the more entitled of the mother.' That was me."

The young Jaime was gradually drawn to the priesthood. He served as altar boy in the area's parish church, and, he says, he was impressed by the priests' lifestyle. "Because of them I was entrusted to the seminary. We also wanted all the trimmings that came with the priesthood."

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Editor

"So for three years and nine months he stayed with Fr. Bernardo Fausto (now a monsignor in Novaliches, Bulacan). 'Mother' wrote to me and said, 'Jaime, from here on (for) when the way was over (he) could recommend me to a higher level,' (she says). 'But the way kept us jumping from one barrio to another so I wasn't able to (see) him and so I became his (co-editor) at the same time secretary—and editor of a monthly magazine.'

"It was a mimeographed affair called The Sunday Visitor. He was in charge of the (seminary magazine).

"So he pulled together all the young men in the locality, and we wrote stories about weddings, horrors with laughter, because we could not get news about Japanese bombings. But our editorials were always inspirational ones: sages...beautiful, isn't it?"

But the young man had ambition, and was always laid low by it.

Quoting Gic, Floresca wrote: "I wrote a letter to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal and said, 'If you ask and become a priest I will be a heroine in society, in the diocese. If I am not I would prefer to be (one of) the ordinary (people) in the diocese.'

"The Virgin first lists in the deadline. 'I got stated. I don't know how. I forgot all about my children. The soldiers has not increased (since then).'"

Politics

As a cardinal facing the "many issues that confront him and the Church, (Sin) is of strict doctrine and moderate. He is conservative and prudent. It would be ill serving to march him as a resistance fight or a liberal life. His politics is no more or no less than that of a man of God."

"The Holy Father and we should not interfere in (politics)," this told Floresca. "I would put it this way: There is a morality in politics as there is a morality in boxing."

Other examples, if I denounce those who committed atrocities during the election, are bragged in politics or am I not doing my duty as priest by exercising my people? I'm a priest and I'm supposed to perform only spiritual duties. But then I should not be confined to the sacristy..."

Reprises

Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines and now chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front, said he never saw Gic personally but knew the cardinal as "a good priest and moral leader through close friends and relatives."

In a "personal homage" to his late friend in the house, the Bishop-lends-faced Sison wrote:

"He was close to my uncle, the late Archbishop of Nueva Segovia, Jose Sison. They were often together as trips to Rome. After my uncle's death, Cardinal Sin sent my mother (a Cardinal Sin) to request. Her, in interests with (Ferdinand) Marcos to stop the torture being applied on me.

"When my mother asked him, in effect(ive) as the other wedding anniversary of my brother Ma. Ramona C. Sison and his wife Rosario, in 1994, Cardinal Sin (said) he would like to baptize my son Jaime, who was born in the army Veteran Hospital in Fort Bonifacio in 1981.

Pride

"The Pere Jose Ma. Sison Commemorial School is today the largest, a meaningful event of the school bore. Friends of mine like (the late) late Lorenzo M. Tanada, my lawyers Jose T. Diviel and Jose Sin.) Jake Ameyra and other prominent opponents of the fascist regime stood as pallbearers of my son."

Former President Corazon Aquino once told the Inquirer that being considered Sin's best friend made her last husband, Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., feel like "the president Filipinos."

When Ninoy was severely weakened by his hunger strike in April 1970 to protest the Marcos regime's continued detention of political prisoners, the Aquino family requested Gic to tell Ninoy to end his strike.

Sin visited Ninoy in his prison cell but the latter refused to end the hunger strike. But he allowed Sin to administer the sacrament of the sick to him.

Prayer

On June 22, 2005, the already sickly cardinal called on the faithful nationwide to support and pray for priests, particularly those in distress.

It was during this period that the Philippine Catholic Church was in the news because ranking members of the clergy were being implicated in sex scandals.

In a statement, Sin said: "I request the prayers, collective and by faithful of the Archdiocese of Manila to observe June 22-29 as a week of prayer for the sanctification of priests...

"To my beloved priests, for this period (of crisis) be a moment of purification and conversion. Let this be an opportunity to examine ourselves if we are truly ready, united to the image of the Good Shepherd...

"If we are united in prayers, we will be able to unite our sufferings with the Lord. And if we unite our suffering with Jesus, we will experience God's saving strength and consolation. Like the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we may be wounded and trampled, but we will emerge victorious living agents of God's compassionate love."

Humility

Fr. Joey Tallo, spiritual director of the Centre of Healing and Purification of the Kairos in Bacolod for Healing Miracle in Lanao, Quezon, has a vivid memory of his brief meeting with Sin.

"Four months ago, I was in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, the official residence of the cardinal, attending a pastoral conference. Somehow, I brought me to the room, apparently upon his invitation. The cardinal asked me to pray for him.

"That short meeting was a very humbling experience for me. I couldn't help myself—I cried after I prayed over him. Cardinal Sin is the epitome of humility."

With reports from Delfin Mallari Jr. and Romulo Pente, Southern Luzon Bureau

Solons can't pin down Bunye on 'Hello Garci' tape

Transcription #1

tongue at last year's election.

"I cannot be sure," Bunye said in response to questions. He also denied all insinuations that Mr. Bunye was speaking with Lozada, him in the tape. Garci himself has denied he is involved in the rigged controversies.

Earlier in the day, the hearing, a lawmaker demanded that the controversial tape be played, sparking a shouting match that ended after the presiding chair called for a break. Administration congressmen protested that since the authenticity of the wiretap had not been established it can only be played privately, behind motels doors.

Malacañang has insisted that the recording has been doctored and that it is part of an opposition plot to unseat Mr. Arroyo.

The decision to take custody of copies of the controversial recording came after Malacañang, chose of the House committee on public information, announced that members of Congress could submit any "evidence" relevant to the issue by the opening of the hearing, paving a ruling on the admissibility of such as evidence.

'We owe it to the people'

Cebu Rep. Gerardo Montano, a member of the administration bloc in Congress, drew stunned but enthusiasm in the majority bloc when she declared that the people of Cebu had the right to know whether Mr. Arroyo indeed cheated. "We owe their one million votes in her province."

"I have a copy of the CD. I read the manuscripts. We owe it to the people of Cebu and the country at large (to prove the authenticity of the tape)," she said, stressing that she campaigned for Mr. Arroyo last year.

"Looking back, I remembered if I still did the right thing. Please (during the ninth Jehovah) join me," said Montano.

The administration could attempt to stop the playing of the tape, but she said she wanted to submit it to be the panel nevertheless.

Abay Pagtua, a former counsel of Mr. Lozada, and Atty. Alexander Estrella, had showed up earlier during the hearing and handed Cebu containing a copy of the wiretap to House Minority leader Francis Escudero. But because he was not a member of the committee, he cannot be called for comment and left the room. Pagtua had previously announced that he had the original bugging.

The committee later also agreed to accept the Pagtua tape.

Self-preservation

Earlier yesterday, the panel suffered a setback when one of the key witnesses, Samuel Ong, failed to show up, citing threats to his life and a letter sent by his lawyer, Estrabeldon Bituin.

"Since self-preservation is one of the greatest of human drives, it is understandable why Attorney Ong cannot risk everything to appear," Bituin said in a letter sent to House investigators.

A former deputy chief of the National Bureau of Investigation, Ong on June 16 announced he already has the original wiretap which he said had been given to him by elements of the military intelligence service Intelpro. However, Ong has gone into hiding before he can be officially killed for his disclosures.

Also yesterday, Sen. Blimie Bolinao-Santiago pressed for demand for the House to stop immediately its "charade" investigation. She warned that the House panel is tampering evidence as evidence.

"If the representatives continue what they did last Tuesday, the House investigation can be stopped by a petition for certiorari or prohibition, on the ground that since the House is exercising quasi-judicial functions, it is acting with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack of jurisdiction," Santiago, a former trial court judge and law professor at the University of the Philippines, said in a statement.

Authentication needed

"The House should take two steps before the representatives continue their investigations. First, they should look for a court order authorizing the wiretap," she said. "Second, they should let the investigation cannot even start ... Second, in the due possibility that a court order can be produced, then the person who conducted the wiretap, perhaps Technical Sergeant Antonio Del Rosario, should be present for questions," Santiago said.

Ong has said that Del Rosario, a military intelligence agent, was the source of his recording.

Montano's insistence that came after a heated debate between Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon and Agusan del Sur Rep. Rodolfo Plaza over a question of quorum.

Macarambon's proposal to submit her tape copies suggested more than three hours of wrangling over procedures, rules and constitutional provisions, but in the end the chairperson of the five committees decided to "take necessity" of the tapes, compact disc and transcripts of the purported conversation between President Arroyo and a poll official for safekeeping.

Garcia and Demolla pursued accusations that he had violated certain provisions of the Republic Act Repressive Practices Act, Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, Election Code, Revised Penal Code and the Constitution.

The lawmakers had repeatedly insisted that any wiretapped conversation was inadmissible as evidence and, more pronounced was a criminal offense, punished by imprisonment ranging from six months to six years and perpetual disqualification from holding public office. With reports from Romina Bordadora, Gilbert Lubog, Aurelio Jaime and Philip C. Tubeza

7-month ordeal over for Filipino hostage

Transcription #1

crisis team led by Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis, the said.

Interviewed later by GMA television, Tarnagoy said he was flying back home and was expected in Manila tonight. Asked how he was treated, he replied, "It was okay."

"I just want to thank the President. She ... She did not stop helping me," Tarnagoy said.

Seguis said that Tarnagoy had been released because of the "sincere and supported directorate."

A previously unknown armed group which identified itself as Harakat Al-Mujahedeen (the army of holy warriors) claimed it freed Tarnagoy after the Philippine government agreed to fulfill its demands, Al Jazeera television reported.

The Doha-based channel broadcast a videotape showing the hostage held by two armed men, reading what it claimed to be a statement by the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs saying it had banned its nationals from traveling to Iraq and adopted a new law to punish those who disregard the ruling.

Seguis said he initiated the help of friendly governments—Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Republic, Egypt and Jordan—and Islamic clerics in securing the accurate release of Tarnagoy. "We also prayed for divine intervention," he said.

As early as after lunch yesterday, the President hinted to a gathering of information and communication technology leaders in Cebu that she was going to have "good news" later in the day. It came shortly after 5 p.m. when Ms. Arroyo emerged after attending Mass at the Cebu cemetery.

The President and she talked to Tarnagoy's wife, Joy, by phone while at the convent and that the latter was profuse with thanks and happiness upon learning of her husband's safe release.

"And this day happens to be the (first) wedding anniversary of the couple," Ms Arroyo declared. "Holy Guillermo when is the right time."

A job well done

The Chief Executive thanked Seguis and his crisis team for a job well done.

She noted that Seguis had been in this since after Tarnagoy's abduction.

The team was able to accomplish their duty to bring Tarnagoy home even if there were threats on their lives there, President Arroyo said. She thanked God for Tarnagoy's safe release.

"Salamat, salamat sa Panginoon," President Arroyo said. "Maligayo ang OFW (Overseas Filipino Worker)."

Withdrawal of workers

Tarnagoy's release comes amid calls by the government for the estimated 5,000 Filipino workers still in Iraq to return home.

The Philippines early last year pulled out its token military contingent serving with US-led coalition forces after a Filipino truck driver was kidnapped. The pull-out caused a souring of ties between the Philippines and key ally the United States, but the truck driver was later freed.

Previous unverified reports said Tarnagoy's abductors had asked for a multi-million dollar ransom for his freedom.

Seguis said, however, no ransom was paid.

The militants initially threatened to behead the Filipino in March, but were apparently moved after appeals were made by the foreign department on Arabic satellite television to spare his life.

Welcome home

In Buenos City, the Tarnagoy family was finally able to hang the streamer they prepared so early as December when news broke out that Robert was to be released.

The 3 x 5-meter streamer, which read, "Thank you Lord, welcome home Bobby," was put up at the entrance of the Tarnagoy house outside the San Pedro Memorial compound here.

The neighborhood outside the house, where patriotic relatives and friends started to arrive, was joyful as the release also coincided with Tarnagoy's wedding anniversary.

Libbeth, Tarnagoy's niece, said they received the news at 5:30 p.m. from Labor Undersecretary Susan Ople.

"My brother Eugene was the one who received the call. We were overjoyed," she said.

Libbeth said their sleepless nights were finally over with the release of her brother.

Tarnagoy's parents, Ferme and Estrabella, immediately flew to Manila yesterday taking with their son, Jay.

The couple went to Jordan, but would fly into right Sth really around him," Libbeth said.

Tarnagoy, the second-eldest of six siblings, went to Iraq on July 25.

The reason for going to the troubled country was to help his parents finish the refunding of his other siblings. *With a report from Jerome Aning, Anthony L. Afinidad, PDI Mindanao Bureau and AFP*

Bro. Eddie asks GMA to quit, if she's the one on tape

From page A1

decision to turn the economy around ... Maybe that's why the card put on here at this time," Time magazine said in its July 4 issue.

While denying speculations that he had rushed home to join groups seeking Ms Arroyo's resignation, Villanueva charged would build a massive prayer rally on Ju. 30.

"We will hold the up. past to historic prayer rally, although we are having a hard time finding a venue. It seems once they hear the word "rally," they immediately deny us," the minister told reporters. "Even the venue to hold our rally," said Villanueva, who heads an organization of roughly seven million members nationwide.

Two paths

He offered two paths that the country may take to solve the "crisis of a failed leadership."

"There are two choices in my opinion: one is having a righteous and principled revolutionary government that would have the courage to destroy the opposition of our supporters in the government," Villanueva said.

"Or, limited on our current system, the President and Vice President, if they realize they can't continue governing the nation, may have the courage and decency to step down, and lead the country to a special election," he said.

Villanueva said an independent election commission must be formed, led by people of integrity, not by "operators and manipulators" of election results.

Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. yesterday branded as "lies fabricated" and "nonsense" calls that a snap presidential election be held amid the "bombshell" controversy plaguing the country.

No basis

Abalos told reporters that there was no basis for opposition bets Aquilino Pimentel Jr.'s call for the President to step down and order snap elections.

"There is no such thing [as a snap presidential election]. And it is illegal, even the President cannot order it," Abalos said.

He said the Constitution was carved on the veneer of the highest officials of the land.

Separately, on his own point, Villanueva said "a military junta was out of the question," as it would be a breach of the Constitution. But he called on the Armed Forces of the Philippines to "serve the public, not the abusive government."

In anticipation of huge antigovernment protests, the Philippine National Police station day were on full alert nation. said.

"The PNP was placed on full alert effective today. We are prepared for these protests," PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil told reporters in Camp Crame.

Militant groups and supporters of former President Joseph Estrada and the late presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. are set to march on Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila on Friday to demand Ms Arroyo's resignation.

On Saturday, a group led by retired Army chief Hermogenes Esperon, the Coalition for National Solidarity, plans to march on Malacañang to liberate press for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

Full alert

The demonstrations were triggered by a wiretapped conversation that allegedly proved that the President conspired with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to cheat in the May 2004 presidential polls.

The PNP national headquarters, Camp Crame, had been on full alert status since Monday.

Two days ahead of the June 24 protest rally by opposition groups, police officials in Central Luzon began sending 500 senior policemen to Metro Manila on Wednesday.

Senior Supt. Stefano Oblad, regional operations chief, said the troops would augment forces in civil disturbance management work.

In the North Luzon Expressway, a major gateway to Metro Manila, policemen were also deployed to set up checkpoints as a precautionary measure against violence. With reports from Jerome Aning and Ilona Bugay in Manila and Fenette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Nene wants Edsa show to go on, but lead actor is gone

From page A1

yesterday said another Edsa uprising was still possible even with the death of Jaime Cardinal Sin.

"Without Cardinal Sin, people power is still there but not impossible. There are additional elements like a corrupted Armed Forces, PNP (Philippine National Police) and business leaders who will rise in the league of a corrupt administration," Pimentel said in a text message to the Inquirer.

But Fr. Bellito Soarse, Sin's private secretary, disclosed that toward the end of his life, the influential Church leader and retired Manila archbishop admitted to him that he was fed up with his meek politicking in the country.

"Like every Filipino, he felt how we have suffered a lot because of all these politicking, all these quarrels and these political maneuverings of leaders of both sides," Soarse said of one of his final conversations with Sin, who played a key role in the two historic uprisings.

He said Sin was hoping for an early resolution of the crisis triggered by the controversy over an alleged wiretapped conversation purportedly showing that President Macapagal-Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano had rigged the 2004 presidential election.

"He said, 'I hope that would end soon,'" Soarse quoted Sin as saying.

In an interview on the eve of his brother's death, Sin Ramon Sin said the prelate was still waiting for more information and disaster evidence on the taped conversations.

"Time in his prayer books, the newspapers were a must," the doctor recalled. "We had all newspapers available. He read them every day. He watched the news."

Soarse said Sin once asked him if Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales and Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, had already made statements.

"He asked such that," he said. "I told him they hadn't made any statement so far. He didn't say anything anymore."

Soarse said the cardinal showed so much concern about the military siege of the San Carlos Seminary in Makati where rebellious Marines Senator Ong had sought refuge. Ong claimed he had the "number of all negros" on the Arroyo-Garcillano conversations.

"He was asking for information and I would update him there to four times a day," Soarse recalled, adding that in the last hour of life, the cardinal told the San Carlos priests and seminarians that he was praying for them.

Until his death, however, the cause no statement on the controversy. Ong has also left the seminary.

Still optimistic

Even so, Sin's death has not discouraged Villanueva who earlier called on Ms Arroyo to resign in the wake of the tape controversy.

"The optimistic good will prevail, even evil," said the senator whose presidential run for Ms Arroyo may down rather than be crippled in another people power uprising.

Like Pimentel, civil society leader Linda Montano said that people power might no longer be possible against the Arroyo administration because its military and police are poised to disperse mass actions to nip in the bud any Edsa uprising.

"Our analysis of Edsa I and Edsa II shows that the leaders then, (Ferdinand) Marcos and (Joseph) Estrada, gave in. They Arroyo resolution to disperse the crowds and they left," Montano said.

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, however, said that while the country had lost a rallying point for people power with the cardinal's demise, there are other Church leaders who have Sin's communication skills.

"I don't think there'd be a vacuum. Bishops today remain soundly involved. The possibility of people power did not die with Sin," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes.

"[People power remains a possibility] as long as the mass movement continues," he added. Christine F. Cigaral and Norman Bordadora

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibarra

US troops start leaving Iraq in 2006

BAGHDAD—US troops may start withdrawing from Iraq in March, a US general said Tuesday, as the new US ambassador to the war-torn country pledged to help Iraqis crush a ruthless insurgency.

As many as four or five brigades (up to 20,000 people) could leave if the country's orbular groups agree on a constitution and elect a government that has broad support, Lt. Gen. John Vines said in Washington via video link from Iraq.

"I suspect we will probably draw down capability after the election, because Iraqi security forces are more capable," Vines said. He referred to planned elections at the end of this year that would follow hoped-for approval of a new constitution in October.

The number two US commander in Iraq foresaw that the troop policy would dwindle rapidly if the political process succeeded, but said any drawdown would depend on conditions on the ground.

In Britain, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw told lawmakers the US-led coalition did not have an "open-ended" commitment to staying in the country.

He added that "violence is at an unacceptable level, higher than was anticipated." Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari said Baghdad would not be surprised and would understand if the United States began to start withdrawing troops next year.

"I would not be surprised ... if there would be some withdrawal, let's say early 2006, I think it would be understandable," he said in Brussels.

"The more our forces assume responsibility, the less role the multinational force will have in Iraq," he said.

In Baghdad, the new US ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad vowed to work with Iraqis to crush the insurgency.

"I will meet with Iraqis to break the back of the insurgency," Khalilzad said after presenting his credentials to President Jalal Talabani in the heavily fortified Green Zone where most Americans and Iraqi officials live.

"Foreign terrorists and hardline Baathists want Iraq to be in a civil war," he told reporters, referring to members of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's Baath party.

Insurgents believed to be led by Sunni Arabs and Jordanian-born terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi kill dozens of Iraqis almost daily, targeting members of the new government's security forces in particular.

Zoltan Lin Rosenfeld on the eve of an international conference on rebuilding Iraq, warned NATO that the "consequences of failure" could resonate beyond the country's borders.

"That's why the stakes are high. That's why we need the assistance and support of the entire community," Erdani told NATO ambassadors.

The Islamic Development Bank said it will make a $500 million loan, Kuwait offered a grant of 500 million dollars and the Slovenian government decided to write off Iraq's $1.12-million 1900 thousand euro) debt.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the United States urged Iraq's neighbours to give more debt relief to the country but held out little hope of any breakthrough at the conference.

She said the meeting of leaders from more than 60 countries and organisations was an opportunity to build "a new international partnership for Iraq" as it emerges from the US occupation.

Meanwhile, US and Iraqi forces wound up the two-day Operation Ignite to and around the province city of Samarkhah, reporting a final toll of 47 insurgents killed and one detained, a military statement said.

The operation was one of two launched last week in Sunday Al-Anbar province, which covers most of western Iraq, and took the lives of five US troops. AFP

Sharon, Abbas agree on Gaza pullout plan

SHARM EL-SHEIKH—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas agreed at a summit on Tuesday to coordinate Israel's Gaza pullout, but Palestinians described the talks as disappointing.

"We agreed during the meeting on full coordination of our departure from Gaza. A coordinated move will ensure a peaceful exit, something that is best for both sides," Sharon said, refusing to meet US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice amid a flurry of last-minute diplomacy.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurie, who attended what officials described as a cordial moment at Sharon's Jerusalem residence, said, however: "It was a difficult meeting and it did not meet our expectations." Qurie told a news conference in the Red Sea resort that Sharon had failed to give any promises to release Palestinian funds frozen by Israel since the outbreak of the uprising, to ease the reopening of Gaza's airport and further release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

Washington is counting on Israel's evacuation of all 21 settlements in Gaza and four of 120 in the West Bank to kick-start a UN-backed international "road map" peace plan.

Sharon, however, reaffirmed his hardline position that no progress could be made towards peace unless the Palestinian Authority led by Abbas cracked down on militants.

Addressing a hostile Knesset committee, Sharon complained the Palestinian Authority had taken "little action to prevent terror" and he threatened tough military action if gunmen tried to disrupt the pullout set to begin in mid-August.

In a gesture to Abbas, Sharon offered to pull back Israeli troops from Bethlehem and Qalqilya in the West Bank within two weeks but condemned the move on a credible Palestinian plan to rein in militants there, the Israeli leader's spokesman said.

"We are still taking casualties," Sharon complained to Abbas in remarks picked up by a microphone that seemed to set the tone for the session, which lasted a little more than three hours.

The meeting was the first between an Israeli prime minister and a Palestinian president in the holy city at the heart of the Middle East conflict. Reuters

ENDANGERED SITES

This 2002 photo shows the North façade of 2 Columbus Circle in New York. This long-debated "lollipop building" is on the World Monuments Fund's list of 100 most endangered sites, announced June 23. At right: shows the Segovia Aqueduct in Segovia, Spain. The aqueduct, a miracle of Roman engineering, is also on the list. AFP

Measures for evacuating US skyscrapers proposed

NEW YORK—A federal panel investigating the World Trade Center collapse is poised to recommend new safety standards for all tall buildings in the United States, including changes in construction and evacuation strategies, according to a published report.

The nonbinding recommendations by the National Institute of Standards and Technology are the culmination of a three-year study of tall buildings meant to help newspapers outline potential attacks or natural disasters.

The proposals are to be officially released Thursday in New York and were first reported in The New York Times.

The panel recommends that evacuation plans be changed to provide faster escape routes for occupants of high floors, who investigators said were to be isolated during the emergencies.

The $16 million investigation also recommends that elevators be built with stronger shaft walls and equipped with sensing that won't shut down if they get exposed to smoke, thereby providing an alternate escape route to most floors.

Standards for ensuring that steel is fireproof also should be stricter, the panel said, and sprinklers should have a backup supply of water.

Structural engineers estimated the proposed changes would increase development costs for most buildings by about 2 to 5 percent, the Times reported.

Limited evacuation capacity at the World Trade Center could have led to 15,000 more deaths if the twin towers had been fully occupied during the attacks, the panel said. And if the towers had been hit, it would have taken four hours to evacuate them—twice as long as either tower stood.

The International Building Code Council and the National Fire Protection Association, representing the insurance industry, will review the recommendations. AP

Former Klan leader found guilty over 1964 killings

PHILADELPHIA—A US jury on Tuesday convicted an aged former Ku Klux Klan leader and former Baptist preacher of manslaughter in the killings of three civil rights activists on the 41st anniversary of their deaths.

But the jury only agreed that Edgar Ray Killen, 80, was guilty of manslaughter after the prosecution withdrew murder conspiracy charges in the so-called "Mississippi Burning" case.

Relatives of the three victims, who were shot dead and had their bodies dumped under a dam, welcomed the verdict, but said more steps must be taken to rid the American South of its racist past.

Killen, who is in poor health, now faces up to 20 years in prison on each count against automatic life in prison if he had been found guilty on murder charges. He has denied the charges.

Killen's attorney James Walstrips, said he would appeal because the prosecutors changed the charges at the end of the trial.

Killen was the first person to face charges of a direct role in killing Michael Schwerner, 24, Andy Goodman, 20, and James Chaney, 21, on June 21, 1964.

The trio—two whites from New York and one black from the southern state—were participating in a campaign to persuade blacks to register to vote.

The three were held in a police station as trumped-up speeding charges, then released late at night and ambushed by members of the Klan and police.

Their bodies, beaten and riddled with bullets, were dumped under an earthen dam and only found 44 days later, following an intense search.

Killen ran as a subsidiary with a broadening opposition covering his face as he left the courthouse for verdict.

He was accused of organizing the deaths, but had denied any involvement.

Prosecutors closed their case on Saturday after presenting testimony from an FBI agent who had infiltrated the KKK. The agent said in 1967 that Killen had told him, shortly after the killings, how the three activists had died and where they were buried. AFP

KILLEN

World's 1st solar spacecraft lost after launch

MOSCOW—The Russian agency Interfax-Thor announced Wednesday the loss of the world's first solar sail-powered spacecraft, Cosmos 1, after it was launched on a converted intercontinental ballistic missile from a Russian submarine.

A satellite monitoring the launch "didn't establish contact, which signifies its loss," a spokesperson for the Interfax-Thor, Igor Degtyar, told AP, referring to a report that should have been picked up from the spacecraft.

The loss of Cosmos 1 was due to the failure of part of the Volna rocket that was expected to take the spacecraft into orbit after its launch from a submarine in the Barents Sea, Russia's Roskosmos space agency said on its Internet site.

"Due to the spontaneous failure of the motor of the first part of the Volna missile carrier at the third second of the launch, the unique device 'Solar sail' did not reach its orbit," Roskosmos said.

Russia's ITAR-TASS news agency cited a senior source involved in the project as saying the spacecraft had probably come down somewhere near Novaya Zemlya.

However, the US organization overseeing the project, the Planetary Society, said it was too early to write off the launch since signals had been picked up from Cosmos 1, albeit not in the correct orbit.

"We feel reasonably confident that what we saw was real signal... what that means is that we are probably in orbit, but it's just the orbit that we thought it was," the Pasadena, California-based Planetary Society said on its Internet site.

Signals from Cosmos 1 were meant to reach Earth once this craft reached orbit about an hour from its launch at 19:46 GMT on Monday.

With the project, scientists had hoped to prove that sun of light would provide a limitless energy propulsion source for space voyages.

Built by Russia's Lavochkin Association and the Russian Academy of Science's Space Research Institute, Cosmos 1 carried eight triangular sails made of tough, reflective and ultra-thin Mylar, one-fifth the thickness of a plastic sandwich bag.

Although the spacecraft weighed only 108 kg, its sails were supposed to unfold to form an enormous mirror 30 meters in diameter that would absorb enough energy to propel it at much higher speeds than those reached by previous spacecrafts.

The June US$4 million project cost four million dollars to private funds, with the bulk of funding coming from US Cosmos Studios, for the launch itself funded by the Russian government.

NASA has begun designing its own solar spacecraft capable of carrying 200 kg, with a sail the size of a football field. AFP

RELIGIOUS TREK
Hindu pilgrims trek to the holy cave of Lord Shiva in Amarnath in the Himalayan mountains where they worship an ice formation they believe to be the symbol of Lord Shiva. AFP/FILE

North Korea pledges not to possess nuke weapons if US is more friendly

BEIJING—North Korea said it wouldn't need any nuclear weapons if the United States treated it like a friend as the isolated nation joined South Korea on Wednesday for high-level reconciliation talks shadowed by the international standoff over the North's nuclear ambitions.

"If the United States treats the North in a friendly manner, we will possess not one nuclear weapon," the North Korean delegation said, according to Kim Chun-shik, spokesperson for the South's side.

The statement echoed a pledge by North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il who met Friday with visiting South Korean Unification Minister Chung Dong-young and said Pyongyang could return to international nuclear disarmament talks as soon as next month if it gets appropriate respect from Washington.

Closing, head of Seoul's delegation, on Wednesday urged the North to return to the six-nation talks in July, his ministry said in a summary of his remarks.

"The North Korean nuclear issue is a matter between the two Koreas as well as an international one," Kim Chun-shik quoted Chung as saying.

The North has stayed away from six-party talks aimed at persuading it to disarm since June 2004, citing "hostile" US policies, and declared in February that it had nuclear weapons. It has insisted that the nuclear standoff can only be discussed with the United States, and no breakthroughs on the issue were expected at this week's inter-Korean talks.

The two Koreas were instead focusing on aid and cooperation projects to bridge their divided peninsula, including cross-border trade and family reunions among Koreans separated since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

At the start of Wednesday's talks, the North requested food aid citing continuing shortages, Kim Chun-shik said. He declined to specify the amount but said it was on par with donations made in previous years. AP

IC inventor Jack Kilby dies at 81

KILBY

DALLAS—Nobel laureate Jack Kilby, whose 1958 invention of the integrated circuit ushered in the electronic age and made possible the microprocessor, has died after a battle with cancer.

Kilby died Monday at age 81 at his Dallas home, said Texas Instruments Inc., where he worked for many years.

Before the integrated circuit, electronic devices relied on bulky and fragile circuitry including glass vacuum tubes. Afterward, electronics could become increasingly more complex, reliable and efficient, powering everything from the iPod to the Internet.

During his first year at Texas Instruments, using borrowed equipment, Kilby built the first integrated circuit into a single piece of semiconducting material half the size of a paper clip. Four years later in 1962, Texas Instruments won its first major integrated circuit contract for the Minuteman missile.

Kilby later co-invented the hand-held electronic calculator.

"It was the only company that agreed to let me work on electronic components miniaturization issues or less full time, and it turned out to be a great fit," Kilby wrote in an autobiography for the Nobel Committee in 2000, the year he won the prize for physics.

Today integrated circuits are everywhere, from microwave ovens to blinker limiters.

The contributions of Kilby are hard to overstate, technology experts say.

His 2000 Nobel citation said Kilby "laid the foundation of modern information technology."

"In my opinion, there are only a handful of people whose works have truly transformed the world and the way we live in it—Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, the Wright Brothers and Jack Kilby," IT chair Tom Engibous said in a statement Tuesday. "If there was ever a seminal invention that transformed not only our industry but our world, it was Jack's invention of the first integrated circuit." AP

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La Union City, Sorsogon boxers clash today

A Cebu representing La Union City against Sorsogon City will be the main offering of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines' "Small Middle Go to Gold"

which goes to Lim, Batangas today. The program, to be hosted by Rep. Oliver J. Dulawan and Pagal Lauis chapter president Ajax Wenceslao, will also feature six special

bouts among members of the BP boxing team, some in deep preparation for the Manila Southeast Asian Games. The event is slated at 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. every Saturday.

Lomibao no longer keen on SEAG stint

By Manang B. Canilla

REIGNING Philippine women's champion Alberto Joy Lomibao is seriously contemplating on withdrawing from the national chess team to the Southeast Asian Games in the aftermath of the controversies rocking the sport's governing body.

"I don't want to be part of any scandal," the 25-year-old Lomibao said in Filipino. "And I hope that they give me what is due me."

A three-time Olympiad veteran and winner of a bronze medal in the Women's SEAG two years ago, Lomibao was the National Open in Tagaytay a couple of weeks back and is trying to claim the P50,000 first prize money the NCFP had promised to encourage for the event.

Chess president Prospero Sto. Domingo Jr. withdrew the prize pot of P187,000 at the 11th hour and his national president a lucrative allowance scheme to put out the fire in the association.

"I should be focused on my training at this time," Lomibao added. "But because of what happened, I entered contentious. That's [NCFP leaders] are not minding the affairs right.

"They are running a dictatorial leadership and they are cutting us down."

Under the allowances scheme of Go, each of the top five finishers in the Open will receive a stipend of P6000 a day until the end of the SEAG in December on top of the P7,000 a month they are entitled from the Philippine Sports Commission as national athletes.

Pep rally ushers in Ateneo-DLS tiff

ARCH RIVALS Ateneo and La Salle takes a breather from their hectic practice schedule to participate in the Pep Rally activity, the kick-off event of the summer basketball game next month, on June 25 at the Alfa Restaurant in Mandaluyong Global City in Taguig.

The meet spurs frustration for the 54th Hong Y Chiuten Showdown. Ateneo-La Salle Basketball Classic slated at the historic Coliseum on July 2 and will be aired live on ABS-CBN (Studio 23).

More than 80 alumni cage greats representing legend and all-star players of the Eagles and Archers, led by coaches Chito Narvasa and Fritz Gaston and the Archers' mentors Jaeger Tolda and Franz Pumaren, will be present during the affair, according to tournament chair David Shalala.

Some of the activities lined up for the event are the free throw accuracy contest, three-point shootout and one-on-one basketball game.

The Blue Babble Battalion of Ateneo and the squad of La Salle will battle for supremacy for the best cheering group.

La Salle Batch '94, in cooperation with Ateneo Batch '92 and Pure Play Sports Management, is organizing the affair, a one-day event together with Accel, Kahlúa Mexicano, Milestone Plaza, Bank of Commerce, Grey's Grill, Inchara Cevin, Orpac, Instrack and IC-ETV.

CHESS CHAMPS: The Tagaytay City Chess Team with Tagaytay Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino after winning the 2005 National Chess Team Championship in Iligan City. From left: Edmundo Cano, NCFP project director Willie Rhodes, Mayor Tolentino, IM Jose Antonio, Rodolfo Punzalan and Lito Abril.

'Tough as nails'

SPECTATOR

AJ S. Mendoza

THE DETROIT Pistons were Game 6 yesterday, because they refused to lose. The hardest to defeat are those of the mean type, like the Pistons.

Wildly orders give up the ghost so easily when confronted with debilitating pressure, tension and gut-grinding pressures, the Pistons are of a different breed.

Rip, Detroit, under coach Larry Brown, has refused an era.

Haven't the Pistons the most nearly was Arcadia Eagle?

"We can beat any odds, you know," said Chauncey Billups, the Pistons' captain. "We are tough as nails."

Allusion for an Pistons picker before, I seem to be not now and no, I can believe Billups.

Like Antonio Tarnopp, the Pistons' new stars possess the most unyielding of warriors.

Like Mikaim Defensor Santiago, Detroit sites takes Orlando Oneness its way for breakfast.

Like Tiger Woods, the Detroit Pistons can also destroy, demean possessed if you will, just to get there first.

In short, the Pistons seem to always thrive on danger, as they did against Miami and New Jersey in their season's fantasy playoffs.

Facing elimination for both times, the Pistons pulled it out of the fire, coming through the eye of a needle to get the chance to become repeat NBA champions since the Los Angeles Lakers from 2000-2002.

I am an fan of the Pistons after the NBA era of Isiah Thomas and Dennis Rodman and coach Chuck Daly ended in the '90s.

But after witnessing the Lakers to win the NBA season last year, my vision of Goes on changed—dramatically I must say.

Scary games anytime, Detroit can stash you. Down only their backs against the wall, the Pistons can find the bellicle.

Intid dunno, they can retake the spotlight.

"I'm still kicking myself," said Rasheed Wallace, referring to what he said was his heartbreak move Monday of leaving Robert Horry alone on the wing. Horry hit the three to give the Pistons a one-point win in Game 5.

Resolving to atone for that, Wallace dunked and drank his Antonio-esque defensive gems in the records, effectively defeating a Spurs rally ignited briefly by a Tim Duncan slam that cut Detroit's lead to 87-86, 3:22 to go.

Then Horry 2/3 lead changes and 7 rims, but once Detroit got its machine revved up, the Pistons were unstoppable.

They had 19 assists to begin with, proof of their superb ball control.

Aided by their typical stifling defense, the Pistons forced Spurs shooters to 12 turnovers—mostly behind the suffocating guarding of Billups.

Not only is defense but also is offense did Wallace prove Game 6 was his.

His body heavily tattooed, Wallace continued the Spurs with 7 points in his pivotal fourth quarter when Tim Amonite had threatened to stroll out a Pacers form.

He even had a pair of 2 as-pizza three-pointers on top of two turnovers producing defense against Shaun Goodell by the homecomids, which all but put Detroit on the verge of a massive blitz rule.

"It was unmistakable of Larry Brown's not to put the blame on me for losing Horry alone," said Wallace, whose tip-in via a contended, tomahawk dunk in the fourth quarter brought the house down yesterday. "But I saw it that. I should've made enough to close the cap."

Richard Hamilton fired 22 and Billups 21 and, together with Wallace's 16, helped Larry Brown score his 1000th NBA playoff win as a coach.

The Game 7 encounter will be the first after 11 years and, surely, the game will set his so-after test of Detroit's new-killed resiliency.

Its vulnerability not a truth anymore, Detroit can become the first to capture an NBA crown by winning games 6 and 7 on the road.

The Pistons can't be lucky beat the New York Knicks in games 6 and 7 at home when they won the 1994 NBA championship.

Yesterday's setback was already a bitter pill to swallow. Another late comeback would've dented to an agonizing loss minutes will never recover from! So cheap, long time. Only a few more sensible days before the season kicks.

Due to win, the Spurs must recover their shots from afar.

Hitting a total of 36-trys against only 8 by Detroit before Game 6, San Antonio gasped from 10-for-29 three-pointers in misses, the Pistons had 9 triples in the first half alone.

Likewise, to win, the Spurs must deliver at the same volume they did 7 of 19 yesterday. That's 12 points down the drain.

If one remembered can't shoot, who else will?

NCA Super Special transfers to Makati

THE NATIONAL Cockers Association (NCA) "Super Special 8-Cock Derby" will be staged today at the fully-air-conditioned Makati Coliseum.

The NCA annual committee and Winning Time Sabong Corporation Gang Cocks, operator of Makati Coliseum, agreed to hold the super-derby that will feature 70 Fight Organizing at 4 p.m.

Answering the Team Sagupaan CCAP is asking old Dutch Antonio and its partners Gov. Chavit Singson, Gov. Tony Abo-ut Medina, Pol Gonzalez, Dongie Lim, Representatives Butch Pichay and Jerome Pena, Ray Briones and Tony Lazo.

Didoy Lim and Boy-Jo Roco will lead the San Juan Coliseum group which held five-meets on the two-meets NJP-San Juan and Golden Circle.

NCA president Ito Nuevo heads the Binangonan Sabbun Group that include Sandiig Gonzaga, Richard Bato and Atty. Claude Bautista while Granger Antonio's Pasig Group will have NCA secretary general Jun Santiago, Bgy. Ronnie Perez, Boy Jao, Ilora Medina and Boy Guzman. For details, call 896-3535 and 895-4475.

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A tall order

IN HUDDLE

Beth Cielo

QINHUANGDAO, China—While operating in front of the immigration counter at the Nanjing airport en route to this Chinese city I pondered the purposes of the Philippine women's team in the 21st Fiba-Asia (formerly ABC) Women's Basketball Championship where we had been hunkered in Level B with Kazakhstan, North Korea and India, which last year in the same tournament were group-mates.

What chance do we have, I wondered, considering that our tallest player, Brit Sevilla, is only slightly taller than I am, maybe about 5-foot-9 to 5-foot-9.

With its old lineup in 2003, the Philippines managed to win only one game in the eight-nation tourney—against Hong Kong, which this year had been downgraded with Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka.

We certainly didn't have the luck of the draw this year. And we have to contend with Hong Kong, Singapore and Sri Lanka, there was a distinct possibility that we would qualify to the crossover semifinals.

* * *

Because of the long-raging controversy between the BAP and the PSC over participation in this biennial tournament was almost swamped. The PSC would not release the P1 million in sponsorship, offered by San Miguel Corp. to the BAP unless each team kicked in P40,000 per player. Another sponsor, which had earlier said yes, went on standby mode pending the resolution of the controversy.

To compound the problem, a 6-foot-1 Filipina-American as well as three 6-foot tall wildcard-entrants from a leading university couldn't join the team due to a conflict in schedule. The Shu Asia Championship was to serve as a tune-up match for the SP team and a chance for the country's basketballers-in-waiting to send the opposition in the Southeast Asian Games in November.

But newly appointed BAP president Joey Lina would not hear of a cancellation.

"This is an international commitment we have to honor," he told the girls a few days before they left Manila. "We will find a way to send them to China. Even if you lose all your games, you have to participate."

Joey's words are everything in motion. Nearing noon hour, visas were secured, uniforms were hurriedly worn, xerographic sets of hand-sketched plays were run, and the required documents were duplicated.

* * *

Unlike in the team's division of the Fiba-Asia Championship, the women's division has one level. In Level One are nine powerhouses—China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand (yes, our SEA Games opponent is in this group). Level 2, on the other hand, is divided into two brackets of four teams each, which I mentioned earlier.

On the first day of competition, we bumped into most of the teams in Level 2 on the gym, but we couldn't tell, for sure, which of the bad (and Jane Bradley) their workouts were cut their way to the top. They were our foes. Everyone whom we should have been bracketed with there. The South Koreans, who were doing their shooting drills in one of the courts, looked much taller and bulkier than their counterparts in practice.

How this was the North Koreans' first time to join the competition, no one knew exactly about their caliber of play. But like the Kazakhs and the Indians, they definitely had the height advantage.

The Indians were tall and real slim—with an average height of 5-foot-9—and on first impression, turned well. They didn't look as formidable as the North Koreans but on last year, when they met us, which makes them a threat. Unlike their male counterparts, they didn't look like pushovers.

* * *

The RP cagebelles were in the last few minutes of practice when a humongous Godzilla hankered in. For a moment everybody froze. All eyes focused on the intruder who probably weighed about 300 lb and stands 6-foot-5. She was obviously Nicole Anderbilkan, Mod Kazakhs new Centurion.

Behind Godzilla marched the rest of the troops, all of them a little less taller and heftier than their leader, who, thankfully turned out to be the coach. It was the Kazakhs' team, all right, the first team the Philippines will meet in this tournament. Their point guard, their smallest player, was just as tall or perhaps taller than our tallest player. Their average height: 6-foot. The Kazakhs, like the North Koreans, are definitely Level 1 material.

RAFAEL Nadal celebrates after defeating Vincent Spadea during a first round match at Wimbledon. AP

French Open champion gets the boot

Spanish clay king advances

WIMBLEDON, England—French Open winner Justine Henin-Hardenne ran out of comebacks Tuesday and lost in the first round at Wimbledon.

The Belgian became the first Roland Garros women's champion since 1982 to lose her opening match at Wimbledon when she was beaten by Eleni Daniilidou of Greece, 7-6 (5), 2-6, 7-5.

The seventh-seeded Henin-Hardenne won the second set to pull even, erased a 4-2 deficit in the final set to reach 5-4, then overcame two match points in the 10th game for 7-6 (5) for the double-footed lefty in the final game, including on the last point when her victory serve clipped the net cord.

Nine-time champion Serena Williams' winning run ended at 33 matches May 11, when she lost the quarterfinals to her fellow American Angela Haynes, 6-7 (12), 6-3, 6-2.

The men's French Open champion, 19-year-old Rafael Nadal, won his first challenger tournaments on Grass Court and beat Australian Wayne Ferreira, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

It was last Nadal's fifth match on grass.

"It turned out to be a little bit easier than I expected," the Spaniard said in broken but improving English. "I play. I think a good match. I serve very good today, and that's important for my game. I am happy with my win. Second, because on grass sometimes I don't play very well with the forehand. I'm very happy for my match."

Seeded fourth, Nadal is trying to become the first man to win the French Open and Wimbledon since the same year since Bjorn Borg in 1981.

Roddick defeated Josh Goffin of Tennessee, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

Roddick, who reached the semifinals last year, said the AFP Tour rankings have nothing to do with seedings.

Roddick, who is 2nd in the ATP rankings

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OPINION

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A question of survival

EDITORIAL

With oil prices shooting up to a record high and political passions almost as high, the news that the government is starting to sink in the budget deficit is welcome indeed.

The Department of Finance announced Monday that the budget deficit for the first five months of the year had reached P67.8 billion, a figure that is well below the P98.5-billion deficit earlier projected for the first semester of 2005. For the month of May, the DOF said, government revenues reached P66.2 billion, while its expenditures amounted to P75.8 billion, thus incurring a deficit of only P7.6 billion. The picture was even better a month earlier when the government posted a P3.5-billion surplus for April, the first time in four years that government revenues exceeded its expenditures. As a result, the government can spend P98.72 billion more than what it collects in June and still be within its target deficit for the first half of the year.

Finance officials are now predicting that the government will be able not only to hold down the deficit for the whole year to its target of P180 billion but also to even pare it down to P151 billion. And the nice thing about it is that the deficit is being contained not by cutting expenditures but by increasing collections. During the first five months of the year, total revenues rose by 11.6 percent to P323.3 billion while expenditures increased by 6.8 percent to P390.1 billion.

For this, the credit goes mainly to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, which has been exceeding its target collections in the last few months. Whether it's because internal reforms are kicking in and making collections more efficient or because the series of law suits against some prominent personalities has struck fear in the hearts of potential tax evaders, the BIR should sustain those efforts to make everyone pay the right taxes.

For the rest of the year, the prospects seem even better that government revenues will continue to grow in new tax laws, like the one increasing "sin taxes," come into effect. The amended value-added tax alone is expected to yield an additional P38 billion for the rest of the year.

All this means that the government, which has been forced to cut the budget to the bone to stave off a financial crisis arising from a crushing debt burden, need not scrimp further on much-needed social expenditures, such as for health and education, as well as for infrastructure and other development projects.

On the other hand, with the political pot continuing to heat up, the administration could find itself under strong pressure to appease or many interest groups whose support it needs to survive. Lawmakers, for example, could demand the full restoration of their pork barrel as payoff for ignoring the demand by some senators that President Macapagal-Arroyo be impeached for stealing the 2004 presidential election. Business, whose support is deemed critical by government in times of peace and especially in times of political upheaval, has been asking for a reconsideration of certain provisions of the new VAT law, like the one raising corporate income tax to 35 percent.

It would be interesting to see how an administration besieged by controversy and weakened by questions about its legitimacy can hold off the demands of powerful sectors such as these. But it would be regrettable if the President throws away what is starting to look as a real chance to get out of the debt trap we have fallen into by caving into political compromises. She may survive politically, but the economy may not.

Radical transformation

FOREIGN COMMENT

With the referendum on assisted dwelling (talinay ang) in favor or against the transformation of life and may himself that science and technology promised...in a way that was unforeseen.

The domain of man has developed in every avenue, making them gods who are able to change life but did not solve the problems of living. Among the reasons that characterize the powerful man, there's the sensation of manipulating life and nature, steering one's own destiny and it is made unrecognizable.

The packed that characterized the debate [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

A legend in the Church

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cavanaugh

DR YOU LAST 25 years of his life, former Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin was certainly controversial and people loved or despised him, depending on which side of the political fence they stood. Sin ran Church politics the same way any top politician Cardinal did: as a force to be reckoned through a combination of personal charisma and political flamboyance. I dare say he was a legend even within the Roman Catholic Church itself. Sin was no saint, and it would be difficult for anyone among the current crop of Filipino prelates to match his stature.

* * *

We all have our recollections of him, which we will treasure in our own individual bank of memories. Much of that, of course, would center on the most important political role he played in Philippine history: summoning his flock, Black in clothes, around mid-February, Yellow in banners, flowers and bread, to protest the military maltreatment from the ranks of Marcos. On that momentous occasion, this columnist, dressed in a pinkish-red blouse, was caught in black-and-white (B/W) Mr. Magazine, was covering candidate Cory Aquino in Cebu City where she had launched the boycott campaign. Suddenly, I was surrounded by angry nuns. What we heard the nuns that fateful and historic had whisked out in a monstrance or Camp Aguinaldo, it was electrifying to all those who had fought the dictatorship and wanted to see democracy restored. But when we heard that Cardinal Sin had called on the citizens to come out that night and surround the camp with their bodies to prevent another Marcos coup, it proved even more electrifying. I recall that even as he called on the people together and mass at Edsa, he also called on his private army, the Carmelite nun, to vigilance mass, to prioritize themselves all night long in front of the Blessed Sacrament to pray for a peaceful and non-violent mass action.

Sin was a major player at Edsa but he never stopped being the "political prelate," making sure voices from the other sectors were heard during the euphoria of the initial days of Edsa. It was only when disaster took its toll on him that his temper seemed to have been shortened.

Myself all mixed emotions. Mass got the peaceful regime of our choice justly deserved.

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cavanaugh

* * *

I must confess that since I retired from this beat last month, I have come to suspect an evil intent in the Church's current unfolding: everything I can lay my hands on about it is... I wonder why was there loquacious since this has been declared the "Year of Africa." Then there is renewed interest in this continent's decline around the world can be glimpsed from the fact that recently the Group of G-8, the richest nations of the world made possible Vice Regina Ann ambassador the world has ever seen. In one stroke the G-8 nations condoned at least $40 billion in debts of the poorest of the poor nations, nearly in Africa, upon the representation of Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair and Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. The rest of the G-8 nations, the US included, should help them tackle a most serious problem in the continent that is aggravated by poverty: the scourge of AIDS. In South Africa alone, it's said that 19% of AIDS afflicted in every three persons.

* * *

It is these proportions that in this Year of Africa an African leader has come to make a first-time visit to the Philippines. He is Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara Tubaya K. J. S. Jammeh, president of Gambia, in West Africa, who arrived in Manila for a three-day state visit that ends today. Gambia is a small, predominantly Muslim country in Africa whose importance for example is setting the boundaries for it is one of the 16 presidents of the Committee of Eminent Persons which prepares recommendations for reform and restructuring of the United Nations (UN) and Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), among this committee's tasks is the formulation of modes of arbitration or mediation in the OIC. Wow, President Jammeh is certainly be very busy in Manila in gathering support for the Philippines as it seeks discover status in the OIC, the top secretary Alberto Romulo has been invited to the OIC meeting at the end of this month in Yemen, which is deemed highly significant as it comes a time when renewed talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front have reached a crucial phase.

* * *

President Jammeh is a military officer but he has carried these strong ties with the rest of the military service but also in culture, medicine, education and professional administration from countries such as the United States, Libya, China, Canada, India and Lebanon as well as from other countries and organizations. They, with the support for him in such groups as the OIC, the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization and others, Jammeh would be rude also to us in calling upon him to help overcome Philippine candidacies in the multilateral bodies.

But more important perhaps, Gambia could be the close enough which FIP pensioners can enjoy off-duty, especially its manufactured goods such as garments, shoes and bags made in Muslims and Cuevas Cebu Americans, processed and packaged foods and pharmaceutical products. Over 50% of exports from the rest of Africa is virgin economic oil, which local and international researchers, particularly those endorsed by the Georgetown University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., have found to be high medicinal and therapeutic value, particularly in strengthening the human immune system. There is a distinct possibility that our virgin coconut oil can be proven to be a effective remedy for HIV/AIDS, the scourge of Africa.

Another field that could be more opportunely explored following the Gambian president's visit is export of Filipino services and professional services such as agricultural, science and technology fields, medicine and construction.

* * *

Calling on all my fellow classmates from the College of the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost College as our time) BS Class of '55. A meeting will be held this Saturday, June 25, at 2 p.m. at Black. Black Golf Club Sarmiento Golf, courtesy of Dr. Cirse Isa. Charlie, please start our golden jubilee celebration now!

Sister's love story

I WAS in my third year of high school when I experienced my first and only love (platonic) for a schoolmate...or so I am. The guy was an aspiring I could hope for: he was good looking, kind, intelligent, rock-star cool and, best of all, he was one of the best basketball buddies. I considered him as he perfect...and I was him out on a date with another girl.

It happened seven years ago, but everything about that day is still vividly

Advertisement

YOUNG BLOOD

Annie R.

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below. ...Ed.

etched in my mind. It was a Saturday, and my friends and I had arranged to watch "Titanic" here that night (we are the coolest around to catch an earlier screening to escape the afternoon heat and humidity. I sure was so cool as I sit

in the front row. I was so pissed that he was there (must be bad side not only a few days earlier that he could not stand Leonardo di Caprio. I wanted nowhere where he was sitting and was about to tap his shoulders when he suddenly placed his arm around the girl sitting beside him. I felt a painful stinging sensation mixed from the base of my spine to my neck and all the way over the tips of my ears. I felt the shivers in his eyebrow why I am probably the only female on earth who hadn't seen the movie) and broke up with him right on the spot.

Like any other 15-year-old girl who has gotten her heart broken, I thought it was the end of the world. I thought that the giddy feeling you get when you receive flowers and love letters is not worth the heartbreak that comes afterwards. I did not relish the idea of falling for another guy again. I was ready to give up on love and all its sweet privileges.

But the thing about love is, when you think you have been completely jaded and you are ready to abandon it, something (or someone) happens to pull you right back in. While in most cases heartbreaks are created by a newborn, my "saviour" did not come in the form of Prince William, or at least, his look-alike. Rather, my belief in love was rekindled by a 48-year-old nun.

A few months after I had caught my boyfriend cheating, a few classmates and I dropped by the office of Sister Loraine, our Religion teacher (in the middle of our introduction course, a time classmates suddenly asked about the question we had all wanted to know but only talked about between ourselves: what the hell is the deal with boys?) I advised, pretty sure that we would get a lecture on sex and sexuality. But instead, more awaited and happened all on her own.

She was a college junior when she met her first and only boyfriend. After the cruelty of being rejection, the girl called her to marry him. She did not accept his proposal; she went out to watch a few more years, maybe wouldn't really be get married yet. The guy understood, gave her the ring and, with a smile, told her that he would wait for her to drop the questions to him instead. He never got the proposal; a year later she told him of her decision to become a nun.

He did not cry in one but, but he told her that he would always love her and that he will be there for her in the future. 25 years, the guy would come and ask her to marry him, and each time she turned him down gently. On the eleventh year, the guy came back, but this time, he did not propose. He said that he knew she loved him, but he also understood that she loved God more. He said he was finally giving her up and he long for her.

Sister told us she had only seen the guy once ever since, and on their encounter the guy never talked or approached her but only smiled from a distance.

Through sister's story (but not cool in the usual Hollywood fashion wherein the boy gets the girl, it has taught me a lesson that even in this most romantic of days, love is not the only thing to live for. Maybe you're still very young, but there is much more to life than being in love. Sometimes you have to let go of the things you love in order to receive more. Sometimes you have to let go of the things you love in order to receive more. Sometimes you have to let go of the things you love in order to receive more

Government repression of media on tapes

THE UNDERSIGNED faculty members of the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication express grave concern over the government treatment of mass media when it comes to coverage of the allegedly wiretapped conversation between President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and a commissioner of the Commission on Elections.

The National Telecommunications Commission has reminded radio and television stations, especially all broadcasters, to be careful and circumspect in their coverage, coverage and discussion of the tapes, warning that if the tapes are found to be fake, the licenses of the radio and television stations broadcasting or airing them will be suspended, revoked or cancelled.

If the government may suppress and suspend, by the media, the NTC reminder was unnecessary, even unwarranted. Given the volatile political situation, the timid caution he blasted it the NTC reminder was construed as an assault on the freedom of the press and expression. Another then it helps the government that the justice secretary has ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to go after media organizations that are playing and airing the contents of the tapes. If wiretapping is illegal, then those who allegedly wiretapped the conversations should be the ones held liable, not the media that only reports the commission of the crime.

We believe that the truth is better served if the media are allowed to present the data that they gather and the analyses that they come up with, free from pressure from government regulatory agencies.

Media organizations are duty-bound to report not only the contents of the tapes but also the related events as they unfold, particularly the government officials' handling of the situation and the reactions of various interest groups. These are matters of national interest.

Instead of trying to prosper the mass media from airing the allegedly wiretapped conversations, government officials should correct whatever inaccuracies or unfair reports media agencies commit. Instead of being silent or unmoved at circumventing the mass media and free expression, they should issue clarifications. Media reports are crucial to the shaping of informed public opinion.

We call on government to treat journalists as responsible individuals who may be justly criminal only if they engage in unethical and irresponsible media practices, but not for doing their job of providing the public with information or aid in the understanding of political and governance issues. The government's handling of media at this point shows that the latter is not erring on the side of caution, but on the side of media repression.

—PROF. DANILO A. ARAO and 17 OTHER SIGNATORIES, faculty members of the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication, Diliman, Quezon City

No classroom shortage in BHNHS

THE FRONT PAGE photo of the Batasan Hills National High School in the June 7 issue of the Inquirer conveyed the impression that there is a shortage of classrooms in the school. The impression that the city government did not anticipate this problem is misleading.

Mayor Feliciano Belmonte has earmarked over P22 million for a four-storey school building. This is aside from the almost completed additional three floor for one of the existing school buildings, which will create the classroom requirements for this year. Construction of the four-storey building should have started last year but for the process of about 60 families of informal settlers. The resettlement of these families have been arranged. We hope this project will be completed in time for the next school year.

Because Bahay Toro Elementary High School was founded in 1998 with only about 500 students. Today it has over 13,000 students. It is in anticipation of rapid growth in enrollment that the city government is saving some more funds for school buildings and other school facilities.

—EDDIE M. FELIBA, secretary to the mayor, Quezon City

LETTERS

Absolutely untrue

THIS refers to the persistent accusation being made by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel that I was opposed to the Innovative Regions Ideales Mindanao during the election period and during the time that I was allegedly talking with President Macapagal-Arroyo and the First Gentleman to consolidate in the controversial topic aired last June 6 in radio and TV stations. This is absolutely untrue. For the record, I was in Mindanao only on the following dates for the specified purposes:

March 12-15, 2004—accompanied Chairman Benjamin Abalos and Commissioner Manuel Barcelona Jr. in the (closed) of Sulu and Tawi-Tawi; March 24-26, 2004—accompanied Barcelona for field activities in the Caraga Region—Agusan (Butuan and Bislig).

April 2, 2004—accompanied Abalos during the "Peace Caravans" signing in Misamis Oriental.

April 14-16, 2004 (not 10 to Mindanao—seminar of Comelec employees of Region XI in Dagupan de Oro City.

While I have a residence in Cagayan de Oro City, I have not been there during the election period except for the dates above-mentioned. These can be verified with the various airlines and shipping lines serving the area. The hectic preparation for the 2004 elections dictated that I should be at the Comelec main office and at the same time closely monitor my assigned tasks in supervising the preparations in Regions 9 and 13, of which I was the commissioner in charge. I was not the commissioner in charge of any region in Mindanao or even the ARMM, and I had no business being there. I also never left Metro Manila, where the canvassing for the senators and party-list representatives were being held at the PICC, until after the proclamation of the winners.

Invented stories and unfounded charges should never be countenanced.

—VIRGILIO GARCILLANO, commissioner, Commission on Elections, (resource), Manila

Justice secretary may have committed some crimes

JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzalez exposed his ignorance of the law when he warned that media and the public of criminal prosecution under the Anti-Wire Tapping Act. For mere possession of the "illegal tape copies." His ignorance was further exposed when the Department of Justice itself failed to file charges against Antonio Trillanes IV for wiretapping in the recovery had prevailed. How could he prosecute others for mere possession when he couldn't even file a case against the very source of the supposed wiretapped tapes?

The Pro-People Law Network recently conducted a legal study on the transcripts of the Gloria-gate tapes and has concluded that the President Macapagal-Arroyo committed impeachable offenses by violating the Omnibus Election Code (conviction of election officials), the Revised Penal Code (bribery) and the Anti-Graft Law (influencing or persuading a public official to commit a crime).

The Anti-Wire Tapping Act requires not just a warrant to be illegal, all parties to a private communication must not have given consent to it. In the absence of any statements from the concerned parties, saying they did not consent to the wiretap, the trial court must which admit the DOJ can prosecute in secrecy. Like the private citizen of advisory, the DOJ cannot file a case without the complaints of the parties to the conversation.

Furthermore, the law requires that for the possession of the tapes to be illegal, the possessor must "knowingly possess" the tape and also know that it was "secured in the manner prohibited by the law." Most of the possessors, not even the justice secretary knows whether or not it was secured in violation of the anti-wiretapping laws. The latter version of Secretary Gonzalez does he counter file a case against Ong because "we don't know where he is" further adds to the confusion that his knowledge of the law has been distorted by years in Congress. Any freshman law student knows that a criminal complaint can be filed even if the author(s) can do not know the whereabouts of the accused.

The statements of Secretary Gonzalez, however, are a threat to freedom of expression as they create a "chilling effect" on the exercise of press freedom and civil rights. Furthermore, his discriminatory or selective prosecution of Ong for inciting to sedition while "neglecting" to file cases for similar against Sen. Aquilino Pimentel and Gen. Fortunato Abat, violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution. It could also render him liable under Article 208 of the Revised Penal Code, which provides for a penalty of prision correccional upon a public official who is dereliction of his duties, "shall intentionally refrain from instituting prosecution for the punishment of the violators of the law or shall obstruct the commission of offenses."

—FEDERICO CRISTOBAL, Centenario, Pro-people Law Network, rodel.lubio@gmail.com

Credible president

TO BE credible in her pronouncements, President Macapagal-Arroyo should act on the transfer of Jaime Ongpin, professional forester/economist, to strengthen the DENR in her definitive, and decisive in her actions and policies.

She has to do away with trends overseas, which entail dollar outlays to cover the expenses of her entourage.

She likewise must refrain from being or unfitting in public. Cabinet members or anybody who gets her ire.

If she could do all these, then URS could become a credible President.

—BENJIE B. MAGAT, Bakakeat, Pampanga, 2010

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, 5th Floor Chronicle Plaza, Pasong Tamo Extension, corner Sgigo and Makati-Ayala Sts., City of Makati or send a fax to this 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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The GARCI tapes:

SA LIKOD NG pagba-BALITA

PART 2

Isang special report. Mamayang alas 10 n.g. sa ABC

INQ INQ TV TV

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

SIX OF the seven Abu Sayyaf members who were involved in the Bubble Mawaru in Lamitan, Basilan in 2001 hear as their death sentences are read. The judge handed each of them 12 death sentences for the kidnapping and beheading of innocent civilians.

7 Sayyaf men get 12 death sentences each

BASILA CITY—A court here yesterday handed down 12 death sentences to at least seven Abu Sayyaf bandits involved in the abduction and beheading of several victims in Lamitan in 2001.

Judge Lea Lay Principe of the Regional Trial Court Branch 1 here, said he had no difficulty arriving at the decision.

"I don't really have this compunction in handing down the death penalty. My conscience would not bother me at all," Principe told the bailiff after the promulgation.

Convicted were Ibrahim Bowak alias Abu, Khaddafy Ajijmal alias Abu Khabar, Abdulla Ima, Jhod Sehabing, Hang Awoi, Jimmy Theng and Jamil Richael Phalid.

They did not show any emotion when the verdict was read.

The seven convicts were earlier charged with murder and kidnapping with serious illegal detention in connection with the abduction of more than 40 people, including children, during an Abu Sayyaf attack on Sitio Campo Uno in Barangay Baluno on the evening of Aug. 2, 2001.

Two male captives were beheaded during the attack while 34 women and children were taken as hostages. One of the female captives was also sexually abused.

Arsadia Ramirez, 30, mother of two of the beheaded captives wept while the verdict was being read.

"The death sentences were not enough, the court should have sentenced them to life imprisonment so that they will languish longer in jail. I want them to suffer longer," Ramirez said.

But the hostage who was raped by the bandits said she was relieved with the verdict.

"There is still justice for us poor people. Now I will just wait for their time to die," she said.

Another hostage, who also attended the promulgation of the decision, said the death sentences were just apt.

"They could escape or make an appeal in the court. If lighter sentences were handed down," he said.

The seven convicts were to be transferred to Taguig in Metro Manila yesterday.

All of the defendants stood impassively while their relatives wept and embraced each other as the verdict was read out inside a small and heavily guarded building in the provincial capital of Isabela.

Hang Awoi remained at large and was convicted in absentia.

Under the law, those convicted would be executed by lethal injection.

The case stemmed from an Abu Sayyaf raid on a farm near the town of Lamitan in August 2001.

The gunmen, disguised as soldiers, abducted a group of farm workers and later beheaded nine of them. Another hostage was shot dead while at least two other captives escaped earlier. —Jaime Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau with AFP

Lanao group bares anti-GMA plot

TIGUAWAS Unity Government (UG), a group supporting President Macapagal-Arroyo, revealed efforts by a group identified with the opposition to recruit if for an anti-Arroyo rally and cited its being done by the Arroyo administration.

The UG, in a press conference, said the effort to recruit it for the anti-Arroyo campaign included an attempt to convince the UG to turn its back against the Arroyo administration and declare that she resigned in the May 2004 presidential elections.

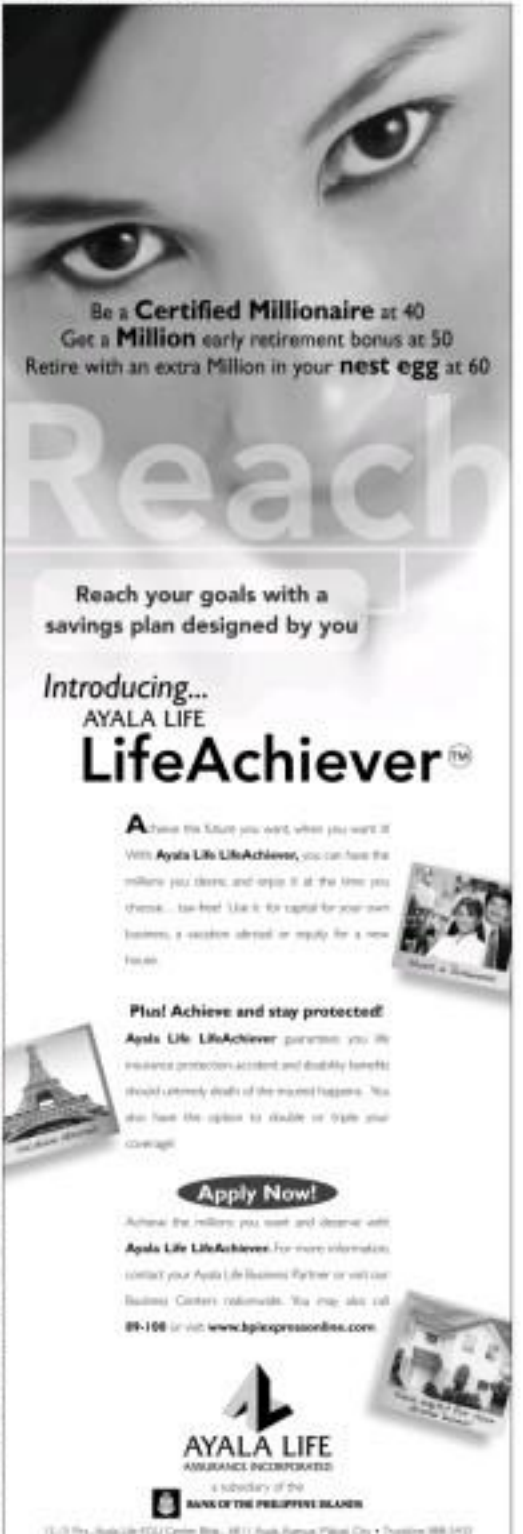
According to Macoy Lorenzo, president of the UG, a former immigration commissioner who is closely identified with ousted President Joseph Estrada called his group several times to arrange a meeting but leaders of the UG turned down the invitation.

The former immigration commissioner, Lorenzo said in a statement, also instructed the UG to link up with a former senator to form successors to give testimonies on alleged cheating in Lanao del Sur by the Arroyo and her campaign workers.

Lorenzo Makalinda, a member of the UG, said in the same statement that there was no vote rigging in Lanao. He said it was a fact that Ms Arroyo won last in Lanao del Norte.

"Our people are ready to die to defend their votes," said Makalinda.

The Lanao del Sur government is composed of different opposition parties who supported the candidacy of Fe Lim, who lost because the JC but entitled to Ms Arroyo's camp seeks other declarations.



Negros jeep drivers can't afford fare hike matrix

SAGOLOD CITY—Many jeep drivers in Negros Occidental were unable to collect the P1 increase in bus rates which took effect on Tuesday because they could not yet pay for the matrices they would need before they could implement the law fully.

Elizabeth Estellito, president of the Federation of Bacolod City Drivers Association (Febas), said many drivers did not have the money to pay the P120 fee imposed by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) for the matrices that had to be posted in their vehicles to allow them to collect the new minimum fare of P.50.

Queue

Other drivers did not also have the time to line up at the LTFRB office as they could get the matrices, according to Jessie Ortega, secretary general of the United Negros Drivers Operators Center.

Estellito said Febaclo would demand that they would only be made to pay half of the P120 fee for matrices since the fare increase to the Visayas was only P1, not P2 as they had demanded.

She said the Febaclo, along with other transport groups in the Visayas and Mindanao, will continue to press for a P2 bus fare hike because pumbas is more expensive to the provinces.

More hardships

She added that they had projected that with the implementation of the Value-Added Tax (e-Lo), food prices would go up by P5 per liter.

"At the rate oil prices are going up, we only hope the present system will be able to continue to operate—the single operators will not be able to survive," she said.

Gas prices have been escalating following a series of increases in the cost of imported crude oil.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

LINGAYEN SUNSET
A wooden cross is seen towering over these fishermen's houses, during sunset along the Lingayen coast in Lingayen, Pangasinan.

Farmers cope with Luisita hardship

By Ronnel Arador
PDI Central Luzon Desk

HACIENDA LUISITA, Tarlac City—Out of work since its entire fellow sugarcane workers in Hacienda Luisita struck in November last year, 39-year-old Fernando Avila of Barangay Asturias have begun cultivating his one-half a half-hectare portion of the vast sugar estate owned by the Cojuangco family.

To stave off hunger, Avila's family planted a mix of corn, eggplant, string beans, gourd, bitter gourd, squash and vegetables.

Like Avila in Tarlac, Mr. and his fellow Ilokanos, too, did the same to a one-hectare plot.

The two belong to the United Luisita Workers Union (Ulwu) and hold shares of stocks in Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), the company ordered to carry out the Cojuangcos' compliance with Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program's (Carp) stock distribution option (SDO) scheme.

Prolonged strike

With eight children to feed, and with the sugar farmers' and mill workers' strike now on its seventh month, the youngest Ilo La Cruz said he had no choice but to make the land available for his family's survival.

"Pero mahirap (but so is how)," he said.

In downtown three plight striking Luisita farm and mill workers harvested a portion of idle sugar land in Barangay Balete here using plows driven by carabaos.

Earlier, a short program was held in the main picketline at the sugar estate's Gate 1. Workers marched around Barangay Balete, site of the "symbolic cultivation of idle Luisita lands."

Rainy season

"The people of Hacienda Luisita have decided to till and make productive certain portions of the idle Hacienda Luisita to stave off hunger in the current rainy season," said Rene Galang, Ulwu president.

The decision, he said, was the "direct result" of the failure of the Luisita management and striking workers to reach an agreement lately this year. HLI declared a temporary stop to operations.

"As the strike went on, the workers and their families had experienced extreme economic hardships, including lack of food and hunger, thus the decision to collectively make portions of the idle Hacienda land productive," he said.

Aside from farmers De la Cruz and Avila, other families have planted rice and vegetable crops in practically all of the 74 barangays comprising the hacienda, Galang said.

But while there is a problem-free of small vegetable plots being cultivated in the hacienda, the farm workers are only "assuming the right to till the land, and not claiming actual and legal ownership," he said.

Police have tempered the ill-legal cultivation of communist soldiers in the hacienda under the union denied this.

Authorities pointed to what they said were communist elements that would show proof of communist guerrillas' involvement in the strike.

Roundup

DENR warns Naga City not fit for tall buildings

NAGA CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has warned that construction of buildings more than five stories high is a forgiveness of the central business district (CBD) here should strictly comply with enforced studies on soil.

Ben Imas, Bicol director of Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB), said the warning regarding the construction of high-rise buildings came from the recently done geo-hazard map of Naga City that showed instability in ground soil in the CBD here.

The MGB has plotted in Naga City's geo-hazard map large areas along and near the meandering Naga River and Bicol River that ran through the city to be in the categories of flood hazard, with susceptibility to liquefaction.

Liquefaction is the process by which soil will ground subsidence during a geological event, like earthquakes.

Plaza City sites lies in the Bicol River Basin area, the south of the plaza in the region that straddles Albay province and the two Camarine provinces, reborn flood-topic continues.

According to the study, "Typhoon and Flood Hazard Mapping," which the Philippine Institute for Social Progress (PISP) sponsored lately, the city is within the area where periodic flooding occurs every five, 10 and 25 years.

The first periodic flooding happens every five years, with maximum rainfall of 227mm in one day; the second rate, every ten years with maximum rainfall of 300 mm in one day; and the last one, every 25 years with maximum rainfall of 400 mm in one day.

In the Bicol Inland map of Naga City (BCI) portion of the CBD here is located in the high-risk zones for high-rise buildings, according to Dennis Hernani, the head of the Naga City Disaster Mitigation Project. Jose Rosendale Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Opposition raised vs Bacolod diesel power plant

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Opposition has been raised against the planned extension of a diesel-fired power plant in Barangay Alijis here, particularly in the light of the presidential directive of the Department of Energy (DOE) that it intends to make Negros Island a model for renewable energy.

The Visayas For Renewable Energy (Vifren) vowed to lobby with the city council and concerned national agencies for the cancellation of the project, and the conversion instead into a renewable energy plant.

"Vifren is a coalition of citizens' movements, people's organizations, non-government organizations, and professional groups from Leyte, Cebu, Samar, Iloilo and Negros Island.

Ed Guillen, president of the Central Negros Electric Cooperative (Cenelco), said Power One Corp. is leasing the old Cenelco diesel plant in Alijis that has a capacity of 9 to 10 megawatts.

There were no details yet on the lease agreement but Guillen said Cenelco decided to lease out the plant because it would cost P200 million to rehabilitate it.

He said Power One planned to rehabilitate the plant and operate it. Once the plant becomes operational, he added, Cenelco need for additional power would be addressed.

Guillen added the rush of getting the necessary permits to operate the diesel plant has with Power One because Cenelco will only be issuing out the permit.

"It will be up to Power One to comply with the requirements needed to get an Environmental Compliance Certificate," he said.

Farmers discover eagle family in Davao jungle

MATI, Davao Oriental—Upland farmers in Sarangani Cabayaya have discovered an eagle family inside a forested area, an environment official said.

Immanuel Ivy, chief of the Protected Areas and Wildlife and Coastal Zones Management of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Southern Mindanao, broke the news on Tuesday morning during the opening of the Pujada Bay Festival here.

Ivy said the eagle couple and their offspring were first "discovered" by the farmers almost three months ago.

He said the farmers gave a big fuss after seeing the two and the baby eagle, which looks for food to feed the parents and the offspring," Ivy said.

He said when they were told about the presence of big birds, they immediately went to the area to verify.

"We saw the birds by using high-powered telescope. They awaited on a huge tree. They are Philippine eagles," Ivy said the location is a mountainous.

He said the nest and the chick, now about three months old, were also located.

"The eagles' presence highlighted Sarian Natural's status as a species-rich critical conservation area, holding the second highest record of Philippine eagle sightings among the research areas of the Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF)," a PEF statement said.

Ivy said the barangay council of Cabayaya has passed a resolution naming the father eagle as Gabo, the mother eagle as Aya and their chick, Cabayaya.

But while the people were ecstatic over the discovery, Ivy reminded all those naming their observance was being threatened by mining explorations in the area.

"That's a big problem really because the eagles need an area where to live. They will really be displaced if full-speed mining activities start in the area," Jimmy Torres, community environment and natural resources officer of the town, agreed.

Dennis Salvador, PEF executive director, said the Cabayaya barangay council had already passed a resolution protecting the nesting territory by preventing activities within a kilometer radius of it.

"Perhaps we will just ask the mining companies to spare the area where the eagles nested because these certainly endangered birds should not be disturbed," Torres said.

The Philippine eagle (Pithecophaga jefferyi), the world's largest bird of prey, was declared an endangered species in 1965, and declared as the country's national bird in 1995.

Today there are only about 500 pairs of eagles remaining in the wild. Ferdinand Zenaida with a report from Rosella Bonilla-Ty, PDI Mindanao Bureau

'Slow justice' for German trader

MATI, Davao Oriental—A German businessman who was robbed of thousands of pesos in December last year has complained of what he called slow justice system in the country. Andreas Dietel, who is a prospective small-scale mining, said he would be returning to Germany to attend to Cabo Frank's Recovery fair. "But up to now, the court has yet to hold a hearing on the case I lodged," Dietel said the case was to have been heard last. Ferdinand Zenaida, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Old farmer arrested

LUCENA CITY—Policemen in Pagbilao in Quezon arrested a 71-year-old farmer for stabbing an unidentified janitor following quarrel on Wednesday. A report said police arrested Ricardo Mendoza from a concerned citizen about Clarence Bandoza of Barangay Quezon. Pilapil here, who was then in a drinking session in a store with a gun locked on his waist. When the farmer was being investigated at the station, police discovered that the old man had a pending warrant of arrest on charges of grave threat. The suspect was detained the municipal jail. Rudy Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Businessman robbed

LUCENA CITY, Quezon—A businessman was robbed of at least P400,000 cash and personal belongings while he was on board his motorcycle on Thursday, police said. The victim, identified as Ringgor Tan, 30, assistant manager of Golden Star Center located in this town. The report said the victim, who had just come out of a bank, was riding on a motorcycle when two unidentified suspects suddenly got into the vehicle in the corner of Calauag-2 Rizal to check a the town proper and of passport robbed the victim of cash, wallet and mobile phone. Rudy Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 held for cattle rustling

LUCENA CITY—Two persons was arrested in cattle rustling were arrested by members of police in a checkpoint in front of the police headquarter in Barangay Kinabuhan, Real, Quezon on Wednesday. A report said that when the police stopped them on board a motorcycle with plate number TTA-680, the habal-habal driver and two carabao on board but with spurious documents. It said

the activities came from Tanauan, Batangas and were about to be delivered and slaughtered in Infanta. Emilio Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Alarm up on Negros deforestation

By Carla P Gomez
INQUIRER Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Negros Forest and Ecological Foundation Inc. chair Leovy Ledesma yesterday called on politicians and private citizens to support a stepped-up fight against illegal logging and wildlife poaching to prevent Negros Island, one of the world's ecological hotspots, from facing disastrous consequences.

He also urged politicians to elevate environmental protection to their list of political agendas.

Ledesma, as a para-lobbying that was part of the Provincial Environment Week celebration, said nearly all forests in Negros have vanished, many in recent years, due to illegal logging, leaving the island with 7 percent or only 24,000 hectares of forest cover.

He said the figure meant that only 8,000 hectares was left of the original 25,566-hectare forest cover at the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park and only 15,000 hectares was left out of the 80,434 hectares that originally comprised the South Negros forest reserve.

"This is a crime against nature," he said, as he rallied on all sectors to help in rescue the appalling nature of valuable and scarce natural resources.

Ledesma said the Negros Occidental provincial government has been working hand-in-address environmental degradation but more support was needed especially from the public, media, non-government organizations and the corporate world.

Unless the dwindling forest cover of Negros Island is preserved, Ledesma said people would witness more disasters like the landslides and floods in Surigao province in December that killed over 1,000 people.

Ledesma said illegal logging is a "multimillion-peso crime" in Negros and he hoped those involved, particularly financiers and businessmen, would one day be brought to justice.

He cited police records that showed that 2.7 million board feet of lumber and timber estimated to have a market value of P54 million, have been taken from the forest of Negros since 2002.

On the other hand, NFEFI and its teams of volunteers had been working hard for over 20 years to reforest hundreds of hectares of land and save endangered species, he said.

Ledesma said while NFEFI is proud of its reforestation achievements, much more are needed to be done.

He said more funding is needed to achieve a "final forest line" and to provide viable economic activities for communities in the buffer zones.

He added that local government units would also need to rethink the zoning and land use plans of their upland areas because expansion is still being planted in areas best suited for trees and higher value crops.

Coco farmers form group to get funds from levy

GRAND CITY—Coconut farmers are demanding the release of the coconut levy fund coming to it farmers' fund they are setting up to develop and protect the country's ailing coconut industry.

Ronnie Tapuan, secretary general of Kapisanan ng mga Magsisiyog sa Pilipinas (Kamapil), said that coconut farmers nationwide have started seeking to take back the earnings of the coco levy funds to serve as the seed fund for the Perpetual Coconut Farmers' Fund.

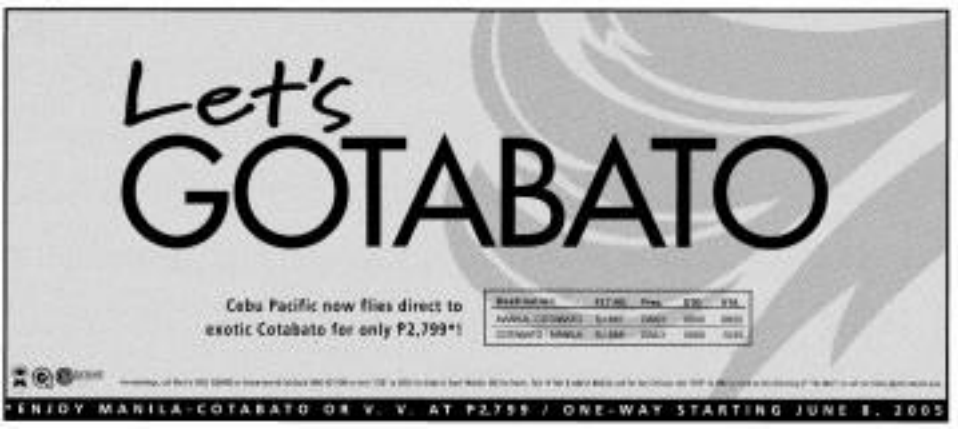
He said that in San Miguel Corp. (SMC) alone, coco levy funds made up 27 percent stake in shares of stocks.

Earlier, recent decisions by the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court confirmed the coconut farmers' ownership of the coco levy funds.

Bai Francisca Umayan, a coconut farmers group leader, said they have yet to receive the funds.

"Despite finding (ekuang-ari) public declaration that the fund belongs to us, he is actively blocking the transfer of the shares," Umayan said.

Mindanao coconut farmers recently gathered to demand the release of the fund and to set up the coconut trust fund committee to manage the levy fund and to converge (formalize Lacorte, PDI Mindanao Bureau



INQUIRER Southern Luzon

BIRD watchers see these Philippine birds fly at the Mirson Pagbilao coal-fired power plant.

Firm provides safe haven for wild birds

By Dolly Mallari Jr.
Luzon Corr

BIRD WATCHING for any nature tripper means observing wild birds in their own physical environment. But what if the exciting panorama of diverse bird species constantly appear not on their known habitat but inside the premises of a 735-megawatt coal-fired power plant, the Mirson Pagbilao Corp.?

Ricky de Castro, a member of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines (WBCP), in his report the group's "Bird of Pagbilao," wrote: "I recall the first time I visited the power plant some years back. I had the notion that energy generating plants were places that emit deadly fumes, spill streams of toxic wastes and sewer flues and fauna with industrial slime."

He said he had requested the "sight and sounds of environmental death."

"What I found out inspired a long-standing belief that there could be no compromise between development and conservation. The sight of birds and plant life in harmonious co-existence with the power plant was a revelation," he said.

De Castro said he has confirmed the presence of different wild birds inside the plant premises was the first sense that caught his attention during the first days in his job as the area manager of Mirson Philippines Foundation.

"Wild ducks in their famous V-pattern flight formation, mixtures of birdcalls coming from surrounding trees, ducks paddling along the pond waters, all seemed to have become [as much a] part of the plant's natural setting that they no longer strike the interest of plant workers," he said.

Bird watchers

The vast and heavily secured Pagbilao power plant compound located in Isla Grande in Barangay Ibabang Polo in Pagbilao town, Quezon province, is in the middle of a once sleepy plantation-habited mainly by part-time fishers and fishermen. It is about 150 km south of Metro Manila and hosts the scenic Turumba Bay.

De Castro said he has called the attention of fellow bird watchers in WBCP about his discovery.

Founded in July 2002, the WBCP promotes bird watching as a hobby and the responsible enjoyment of nature.

Mike Lit, WBCP founding member, recalled the club's first bird-watching escapade in Mirson in July last year.

"My first bird included not to be a single Rufous Night Heron. It stayed for a few minutes and then decided to leave. Gradually, we saw the chicks on the ponds. Two full rainbows arched in the west with the Dusk of Philippine ducks under it. Everyone was in awe in the sunrise," Lit said.

The group estimated that there were more than 400 ducks in all.

"Swallows and swiftlets flew circles around us while three interwoven layers walked about in the tall grass. I counted 15 readers standing silently on one side of the salt pond," Lit said in his recollection.

Some of the readers in the long-legged birds frequenting shorelines of bodies of water turned out to be an uncommon species of plover called Mahjongga Plover.

Lit said the presence of birds inside the power plant premises indicates a sound and well-balanced environment.

Rare birds

Environment-related groups have long protested the operations of the coal-fired power plant on charges that it is harmful to humans and the environment.

But according to De Castro, to date, some 20 species of rare and some endemic birds have been identified inside the Pagbilao power plant premises.

The most coveted sightings are those of ducks known as the Philippine Mallard, which can only be found in this country.

"Sightings of the species are getting scarce because due to excess wetland burning and loss of habitat. The power plant is now host to at least one percent of the total global population of this race of bird," De Castro said in his report.

Before his discovery of the bird paradise inside Mirson, the power plant people had been resorting to reports on the presence of wild birds in Pagbilao. "But they didn't know where the flocks stayed. They were entertained the idea that the birds would choose a coal-fired power plant as home," he said.

He recalled that at first, its dominant fire exploded sightings of Philippine ducks in the area as just plain "domesticated ducks."

De Castro cited the Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz power station in Kapar, Malaysia, where over 40 species of birds come to roost at its salt ponds during high tide and feed at low tide on the rich, lean mud mudflats surrounding it.

He said the Malaysian 2,200-megawatt power plant had been selected for inclusion in the East Asian Australasian Shorebird Site Network, signifying its importance as a site for shorebirds.

He said the Pagbilao power plant would target the entire ecosystem. "We only need to submit the necessary documents to certifying organizations," he said.

Origin

When asked about the probable origin of the bird-resting refuge at the plant premises, Lit said most of the species could be considered migratory birds escaping the cold in other parts of the globe.

It was learned that most of the bird inhabitants reach their peak number during October and November.

"But for those birds who now consider the plant as home, they leave the plant before winter and wander in the nearby areas in search of food. Before autumn, they all return to the plant premises. We've escape the dangers outside posed by hunters. It's a sanctuary for them," De Castro said.

In a basic introduction to the enabling world of bird watching, De Castro said he quietly led a couple of reporters on June 7 onward a dusk jail spillroads along one side of the power plant's airstrip.

Armed with a telescope, they observed resources different birds perched atop the trees. A flock of Ducks flew over the runway and landed in the salt ponds.

With his high-powered spotting scopes, Lit, occasionally naming the pages of his bird guide, listed that the birds were all over—Philippine ducks, Zebra doves, Crested Myna, Little Egret, Pacific Swallow, and Rufous Night Heron, among many other birds.

Safer haven

"Most of these birds now consider the plant as a safe haven. They always return here and we pay the security and harmony of the place," Mirson public affairs manager Gregge Hernandez, said.

Bernardino said the company plans to open the "bird sanctuary" to researchers.

Mirson officials said the power station and preservation of the environment is the two main focus their priority. "Our paramount environmental objective is to be a good steward of the environment and to contribute to sustainable development in the communities that we serve, ensuring that we meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the quality of life of the future generation," said the company brochure.

Mirson boasts of passing the ISO 14001 certification audit conducted by the Geneva-based Societe Generale de Surveillance Group for its environmental management system.

Mirson Pagbilao Corp. is a subsidiary of Mirson Philippines Corp. It is considered the largest private producer of electricity in the country, generating more than 2,000 MW nationwide.

Sequestered Albay radio station cannibalized

By Leo Martin B. Garcia
Legazpi City

BESIDE the main road of Barangay Binanu in Legazpi City, about 2 km east of Albay's capitol building, is a compound of dilapidated houses and rundown shops that peddle wares and services.

Surrounding shanties obscure the place. Only the concrete base that used to support the edifice of the popular dzGW radio station of Bandillo Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) remains. The network, owned by Marcos crony Roberto Benedicto, has been sequestered by the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

The tower and equipment are all gone. Five weeks ago, seven men brought down the radio tower that had stood there for 26 years. The entire area recorded in the barangay listeners.

The station, or what was left of it, is now a showcase of a negotiated government property.

"The tower used to stand there on the hog," said barangay councilor Nestor Arevalo, pointing to the site where it once stood a few meters from the main building.

The 3,000-watt transmission facility of dzGW, which began operations in 1961 under the BBC network, sent out signals that were then considered the widest in area coverage.

After the downfall of the Marcos regime in 1986, the station was sequestered by the PCGG.

A businessman leased the facility for some time and used its equipment it at an all-woman radio station called "Radyo si Mun."

The structure was ransacked and the station was subsequently closed.

On May 14, the tower was dismantled by unidentified men, who brought the cannibalized parts to the old station building. The pieces were later moved elsewhere, residents said.

No action

No one has been charged even after the perpetrators pointed to a certain Sonny Briñuela, a real estate developer from Barangay Cagmanicuan.

The barangay repeatedly tried to contact Briñuela, but he was always unavailable, tending to his businesses in the locality.

But his estate business associate, who requested anonymity, said Briñuela acted with the blessing of the city mayor's office. Briñuela, however, denied that he had illegally commercial that the old tower posed a hazard to the residents.

Briñuela's associate also provided the business with enough estimates of how much the latest bulldozed pieces weighed.

"Some 200 kilos," he said, but was unable to provide details as to who benefited from the tower's bulldozed pieces of the tower.

Legazpi City Mayor Noel Rosal (LP) before, Nonong denied involvement in the matter. He interviewed during suggested in the city engineer to ask the town's of the radio station to do something about the weary as a possible danger to people.

He also denied involvement of the mayor in the case. He added that he was asked somebody to tell Barangay Binanu officials to blotter the theft of the tower parts when he learned about what happened.

The mayor has also categorically denied involvement.

As stated in the copy of the blotter obtained by the Inquirer, Briñuela implicated the mayor and Vice Mayor Jesse Robredo before the barangay officials.

Salazar also denied any involvement and even agreed in stand as witness against Briñuela should the PCGG decide to file a case.

Caretaker

A day after the incident, a certain Elito Contreras reportedly went to Arevalo's house and claimed responsibility for the tower's dismantling, according to the barangay official. Contreras, the husband of a former employee of the station, is known to many people in the community as the caretaker of the sequestered station.

Several years after the station closed down, Contreras reportedly began selling the sequestered components for rent.

In a few months, houses and shops have sprouted in the area.

"We were not even notified of his plans about the compound, which lies in our barangay and is a property of the PCGG," Arevalo said.

She said she did not know who benefited from the materials.

Barangay chair Rafael Cuenca and Contreras was acting as caretaker by virtue of a power of attorney allegedly given by the general manager of the defunct station.

No caretaker

Alfredo de la Paz, PCGG has rendered Assets Division head, however, said the PCGG had not appointed any caretaker for the "sequestered asset."

The PCGG official said the agency had instead appointed an official from the town office to supervise the property.

The Mayor Marcelo based PCGG official periodically inspects the property.

The last time PCGG representatives visited the government asset was sometime in March to April last year, De la Paz said.

The tower area still there.

After dzGW's closure, the P1-million building was abandoned.

But all the equipment are gone now, except various said.

The broadcast station is now unrecognizable. About a year ago, it was leased out by Gonzales to Binanu, who put up a karaoke bar, something to antiquanty of business stalls in the area.

A portion of the building has been torn down to house a souvenir lumber shop.

But De la Paz said the PCGG served an eviction notice to Gonzales and other tenants of the property two years ago.

Asked about the barangay's plan on the situation, Cuenca said he assured the properties preserved.

Contreras, who frequently changes addresses, according to residents, was still nowhere to be contacted.

As a result of this development, De la Paz said he had signed a memo order for PCGG personnel led by supervisor Linda Tarrago to investigate the matter and conduct an updated inventory of the "remaining assets."

Tarrago said they planned to visit the property this week.

For now, the shops at the compound may continue business as usual, until everything is settled.

Questions of the Week

Do you think that President Gloria Arroyo still has the credibility to lead our nation! Why or why not!

Senders of short (E) texts as published in Tuesday's **IngBox** *will each receive an "Inquirer Mug"!*

METRO
Editor Esther G. Dipasupil

EZ2 29 14 | SUERTRES 9 1 6 | FOUR DIGIT 6 6 1 4 | MEGALOTTO 6/45 7 8 22 26 37 29 P11,074,971.60

Baclaran vendors may soon find a roof over their wares

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ILOILO, with religious items outside the National Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Baclaran, Parañaque City for sibling.

But her means of livelihood would be in jeopardy once the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) launches its anti-illegal vendors campaign.

Elena, 38, has been selling candles, novena prayer books and rosaries in Baclaran for 21 years now. Sales from the religious items she sells in the sidewalks has enabled her to send her three children to school.

Although she admitted that she and her other companions sell their wares in a prohibited area, she said they have nowhere else to go.

"We are hoping that the MMDA finds space for us," she said. Elena said she hopes they could afford the lease, if they are given a place to set up their wares. But help may be on the way, with a promise from Parañaque Mayor Florencio Bernabe to help them find a solution to their woes.

Vendors in the perimeters of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Baclaran will be shooed away, especially on Wednesdays when it is novena day: cold wares, fruit juice, tires and SUVs, cheap underwear, trousers, shoes and pants, colorful umbrellas, fans and watches.

As of October 2004, sidewalk vendors, including Elena, reclaimed the streets of Baclaran after the MMDA stopped its clearing operations. This move disappointed MMDA chair Bayani Fernando.

Bernabe told the reporters the other day that he has yet to meet with MMDA officials who earlier announced that they would coordinate with the Parañaque City and Pasay City mayors to secure pages against illegal vendors.

But he said he would allow vendors to sell their wares in his city, on a regulated basis. Police deployment in the area would make sure the vendors would not go beyond the sidewalks, he added. Before the year ends, the vendors would move to a permanent place in a structure to be erected on a 4,000-square-meter lot near the church, Bernabe said.

Archbishop Cruz on accuser: 'I told you so'

By Christian V. Esguerra

A GAY A commissioner, his incorrigible gambler, A drug money collector. A "jueteng" payola himself. Gary.

The enemies apparently working behind the scenes, Archbishop Oscar Cruz got this mix of unbelievable. If not outrageous, accusations and more from a man who also claimed to have been sexually abused by the crusading prelate.

Cruz, the man who singlehandedly revived the jueteng controversy now hounding the Arroyo administration, had early to resigned that his enemies' "dirty tricks" department would soon come out with outrageous accusations in trying to discredit him.

Jaime "Jaime" Aquino, 37, with rare unidentified male companion, yesterday went to the office of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines in Intramuros, Manila to file the complaints against Cruz.

Sensing a "kanyazo" from start, if not a well-funded barrage against Cruz, reporters threw a barrage of questions that visibly rankled Aquino.

Personal welcome

For one, Aquino failed to recognize Cruz who had walked towards him when he went to the CBCP to personally welcome the accuser. Spokesman Father Jerry Orbos had known the bishop when he was still 10 (he began training in the archbishop only when Cruz went with him to a mission press conference his handlers had hastily arranged at the CBCP Media Center.

Aquino, who said he was a reporter for the Journal Group of Publications, was also incoherent when Cruz began calmly asking about details of his supposed crimes and immoral acts. Aquino could not answer Cruz on questions dribbled with a former girlfriend.

"The jueteng probe really unsettled many people," Cruz told reporters yesterday. "For this early, I forgive the people whose motive is something else but shrewd."

It is for the same reason he addressed to no less than Pope Benedict XVI, Aquino linked the bishop to jueteng, illegal drugs, and to a supposed dummification plot against the Arroyo administration.

Waste of time

"I think my mission are waiting their time," Cruz said, adding that he had never seen Aquino until yesterday. "Even if they do, I have no time for them. I would have been spilling the beans on the people behind jueteng."

Reporter Villanueva, editor in chief of the Journal publications, however, said that Aquino had ceased to be a correspondent of the Daily Tribune "for people's freight and people's falls for almost one month now."

"The editors decided to drop him for writing a number of articles which were found to be baseless," Villanueva said in a statement. "When confronted by the PNP official in Binondoan on the alleged publication of jueteng in the province," he added.

"However, the PNP official denied the story and complained that he never met nor talked to Aquino. "When confronted by the editors, including the undersigned, Aquino tried in his story that when he was ordered to come to distribution, he refused. This angered his immediate dismissal," Villanueva said.

Cops blame director's family for snail-paced investigation

COLORS OF LIFE
Fifty-six-year-old Nubera paddles his oil painting for P1,200 to P1,000 each, along J.P. Rizal Street in Makati City. His works have helped send his children to school.

Santiago kin ask: Why blame us? How can we be a hindrance?

By Tarra V. Quismundo

POLICE know the alleged gunmen evisible. They have a first name and four family names as leads. And they have many witnesses to the incident.

But two weeks since television director Louis "Lolit" Santiago was killed in a daytime ambush outside a bar in Makati City frustration was all that police had the family of Santiago shared.

"The family would not cooperate with us," said Chief Inspector Manuel Suarez Jr., Makati police Criminal Investigation Detection Division, explaining the apparent snail-paced investigation into the killing.

"We contacted them several times, but they would not help us; it would be proper for them to cooperate with us so we could quickly [resolve the case]," he added.

Suarez said he reported the family's being "uncooperative" to National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Hidel Quezon during a case conference at the Southern Police District premises this morning.

Quezon had asked Suarez why the blotter police had been making for long to solve the June 8 shooting outside V-Bar in the Ayala Center, where Santiago was killed and five other bar goers and a responding policeman were wounded.

But Santiago's family feared the curious as more like a joke.

"My brother was killed. My father's son was killed. How could we be a hindrance?" said Santiago's younger brother Nicolo.

Nicolo said his family was not holding anything back from the police.

In fact, the Makati police had begun verifying four witnesses that may belong to a certain Christ, the alleged gunman in the early morning shooting.

Police had also taken custody of a Toyota Hi-Lux which the shooter allegedly used to escape from the crime scene.

Expressing some frustration, Nicolo said members of his family had begun looking into the incident.

"We have asked people, who they should have already asked. It's not like we are doing our own investigation. It's just we feel the police are not doing enough," Nicolo told the reporter in a phone interview yesterday.

Next on giving leeway to his brother's death, the younger Santiago said his family decided to ask Vilar guests and staff what they remembered about the shooting.

"It's very, very informal, just inquiring on our own, and anything we learn, they should know," Nicolo said.

However, he said all they have gotten so far were rumors.

June 24 special day in Manila, San Juan

By Tina G. Santos and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE CITY of Manila and San Juan town will don a festive air tomorrow when it celebrates two important occasions on its respective fronts.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has declared June 24 a special non-working holiday in Manila as the city marks the 434th town-up Maynila celebration. In San Juan, residents will mark June 24, the feast day of their patron saint St. John the Baptist, with a series of activities.

The Tuesday What? in Manila was filled with people yesterday at the city's three-day food festival dubbed "Taste-as in Manila." Also yesterday night, City Hall presented classic Filipino movies in Manila's redeveloped plazas.

The celebration in San Juan began Saturday with a three-day sports festival. A fire concert is scheduled tonight, which will end with an elaborate fireworks display. Tomorrow, a street dance contest will start at 7 a.m. followed by segments of floats.

Cager Crisano faces more raps

By DJ Yap

A BOXMOMO has filed a complaint in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office against former Philippine Basketball Association basketball player Alex Crisano, accusing him of making inappropriate advances.

The 19-year-old complainant alleged that Crisano had harassed her private parts in front of her while she was managing him in his room on June 15.

Crisano, who has played for the Gordon Kings, denied the charges, saying the homemaid would be trying to get back at him because she had been fired for allegedly having his two children aged five and three.

The complainant narrated that at about 7 p.m. on June 15, Crisano had called her up for him as a massager in his room.

While she was massaging him, Crisano allegedly took off his clothes and began fondling himself. The maid said she then got up and tried to leave.

But Crisano allegedly swore at her and grabbed her private parts. Crisano's other maid, Idita Saldivara, reportedly entered the room and saw them, she said.

The maid, who works for a placement agency, said she was supposed to look after the minor of Crisano's girlfriend, comedienne Ethel Booba. Instead, she was sent to Crisano's home where she realized his true motive for hiring her.

In a TV interview, Ethel said she did not believe the maid's accusation. The comedienne also confirmed that the maid was no longer working in the Crisano household.

In April, the basketball player also figured in a controversy when his gun was allegedly stolen by a vendor of pirated DVDs. Police later found out that Crisano had no permit to carry the gun and charged him with illegal possession of firearms.

Cardinal Sin, hero or villain?

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

THE HERO or villain, depending on how you see Jaime Cardinal Sin, is dead.

Sin gathered the crowds at Edsa in People Power I and II. Whether he was right or wrong in doing so, only time will tell.

To people who agreed with him, Sin was a media crusader. But to his critics, he was an interloper in the modern Judas Iscariot. Whether you liked him or hated him, Cardinal Sin already has a place in our history.

* * *

His celebrated government officials for leading immoral lives. He posthumously hit Estrada and President Gloria who flaunted his women.

But the good cardinal forgot to clean up his own backyard merely because of his religious vocation. Sin had kept women at bay to appease the hurting illicit affairs.

* * *

I'll never forget the material line you about the friar or couple that murdered Cardinal Sin, who lived a double life in the priesthood.

Sin, in the joke went, was rushed personally by President and Mrs. Aquino to a hospital in their limousine after he had a stroke during dinner with them at the palace.

When the drought he would not make it, he looked up to heaven and said, "Lord Jesus, thank you for making me the bishop—in the middle of two thieves."

* * *

Speaking of jokes, if Democrat Macapagal-Arroyo doesn't run for reelection and the vacuum may such that the citizenry would immediately benefit from it, the jokes going around might lead to her downfall.

True, there's no competent leader from the opposite line that can replace her at the moment. But such a leader might emerge from the shadows if those jokes would continue.

Jokes that flew bitter and distaste preceded the ouster of Presidents Marcos and Estrada. The jokes were sent by word of mouth during the Marcos years as text messaging was still years in the future. Jokes flooded the text message system during Estrada's time.

Why did the jokes lead to the downfall of both Marcos and Erap? They were a sign of disrespect for their persons and their office. Since there was no longer respect for the two leaders, people decided to kick them out of office.

* * *

If I were GMA I would bring down the cost of medicines on the poor and people from the lower middle class would benefit.

Thousands of patients are dying of sickness in and out of hospitals because they can't afford the high cost of medicines.

How does the government bring down the cost of medicines?

By importing raw materials for basic medicines from India and other countries where medicines are cheaper.

If small pharmaceutical companies are allowed to import the raw materials for medicines, they'll be able to manufacture low-cost medicines.

Multinational drug firms and a couple of local companies monopolize the sale and manufacture of basic medicines. They dictate the price of medicines.

What are the basic medicines? Those for asthma, hypertension, tuberculosis, diabetes, fever, diarrhea.

Pasig gives, takes back permit for Lanot rally

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IT WAS "yes" for Arroyo but "no" for Lanot.

Pasig City Mayor Vicente Enrile quickly canceled a rally permit for Lanot, a "Bantayog ng Mga Bilanggong Pulitikal" leader, when he found out that it would be used by supporters of slain Rep. Henry Lanot.

He said the city government was "deceived" when it approved the event to be held on Saturday at the Plaza Parad.

In their application for a permit to use the place, the August 21 Movement (ATM), through Bishop Francisco San Diego, said the city government that it would hold a "thanksgiving Mass" for President Macapagal-Arroyo for "successfully [surviving] threats [to her administration]."

ATM, named after the date when Lanot was gunned down inside a Pasig City restaurant, was supposed to be publicly launched at the event.

However, when Enrile read a pamphlet inviting people to the rally, he immediately canceled the permit.

"They are liars. They made fools out of us. They even used Bishop San Diego," Enrile said, referring to Lanot's group.

In the pamphlet printed in Filipino, the group said "truth and justice has disappeared in the city since 1992" and that the assassination of Lanot "made it a 'walang-sap sa' for the people of Pasig."

"This is the right time for us to unite and bring back peace, order, truth and justice [in the city]," the pamphlet added.

Members of the group denounced the cancellation as political harassment.

The ATM will be a umbrella of organizations of Lanot's supporters and sympathizers, his widow Ruth Rita said.

Lanot was the mayor in 2004 but lost to Enrile. But he protested Enrile's victory, alleging massive vote-buying and security campaigning.

He was killed before the case could be resolved. His supporters and allies said the assassination was "politically motivated."

In a letter to San Diego yesterday, the mayor said "clearly, the [date is not for peace but [would be for] inciting Pampanlon to rebellion[ist] to use."

AMTI
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THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
B1

BUSINESS

Editor Raul D. Mercado
Assistant Editor Connie S. Martinez

WHAT'S INSIDE

Mindanao exports hit $338M in March / B-4
Meralco to start final phase of refund / B-6
BSP turns down bid to aid pre-need firms / B-2

Peso steady at 55.645:$1; HSBC forecasts rebound

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO yesterday closed at 55.645:$1, almost unchanged from Tuesday's 55.64, as traders pounced after the mild slide seen over the previous weeks.

Foreign exchange traders said the losses that had sold pesos in favor of US dollars was a good opportunity to take profits while awaiting further developments on the local political front.

After threatening to break past 56:$1 last Tuesday, the local currency gained some ground as the market started to digest the political tensions and chose to wait out the sidelines before taking any further action.

HSBC Securities, the unknown, said the Philippine peso was poised for a rebound as it believed some of the factors that had weakened the local currency had been fully priced into the exchange rate.

Recommending a "buy" on the peso, HSBC Asian currency strategist Richard Segunge predicted a reversal in the US dollar's gains against the euro that, in turn, should benefit the peso.

He said it was "extremely unlikely" that President Macapagal-Arroyo would be toppled through another populist uprising and expected the current political noise to fizzle out.

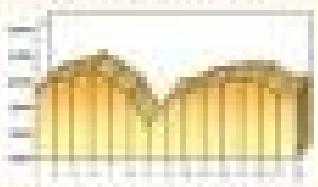
As the Lower House commenced its hearings on the wiretapped conversations alleged to involving the President, and the Senate on the illegal gambling payoffs, ATR Kim-Eng Securities economist Leo Lorenzo cited concerns that the political environment might derail the implementation of much needed economic

A FILIPINO trader monitors during morning trading at the Philippine Stock Exchange in the financial district of Makati as shares ended marginally higher on a technical rebound after two sessions of losses on Wednesday, June 22.

CURRENCIES

STOCK MARKET

Bargain-hunting lifts stocks



Share prices closed 0.33 percent higher yesterday as most bargain-hunting lifted a three-day fall sparked by political concerns and record oil prices, dealers said.

They said, however, that the gains would likely be short-lived as the lack of possible political instability sparked by allegations of vote rigging and corruption against President Gloria Arroyo and members of her family.

"How the economy fares under the pressure of record oil prices is a long-term issue while could badly derail economic policy.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 6.03 points to 1,868.87, having traded between 1,861.85 and 1,881.43. Volume was 632 million shares worth P677 million.

BSP turns down proposal to aid ailing pre-need firms

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday turned down the proposal of a Securities and Exchange Commission official for the BSP to open a liquidity window for ailing pre-need firms.

Jesus de Zuniga Jr., SEC chief legal counsel and assistant governor, yesterday said that the banking regulator could only extend liquidity assistance to banks as these institutions were under the BSP's jurisdiction.

"It is not in our mandate, not in our area," Zuniga said.

The BSP official was puzzled why the proposal was even included in the bill creating a pre-need insurance corporation.

Zuniga said even the BSP's rediscounting window could not accommodate pre-need companies.

The rediscounting facility is a rebooting window offered by the BSP to banks.

A proposal has been filed in Congress seeking the creation of the Philippine Pre-need Insurance Corp., which will manage a national government fund, including that collected from pre-need firms and its investees.

Jesus Martinez, SEC commissioner and chair of the committee on pre-need, said instead of such an insurance company, what the pre-need industry needed was a BSP liquidity window so that ailing companies could liquidate their investments.

House Bill No. 3741 proposed the establishment of a P50-million fund by the national government. The bill includes assessment fees collected from pre-need insurance firms, as well as reserves for premiums and financial assistance herein.

The proposed entity will have the same authority and functions bestowed upon the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

The PDIC is an insurance of banking institutions.

Besides conducting periodic assessments of pre-need firms and imposes fines on mismanaged companies, the proposed body will have the option to provide loans to bail out endangered pre-need companies.

Based on the estimates of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the pre-need industry has over P600 billion worth of assets in real estate, treasury bills, or government bonds.

For PPI, rehab may no longer be an option

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHILIPPINE CD UEO pre-need firm Pacific Plans Inc. may no longer have to go through rehabilitation since a local court decided to put Lifetime Plans Inc. back under its management, according to an official of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

On June 9, Judge Ronnie Bano of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 61 ordered PPI to submit an audited financial report showing the assets and liabilities of Lifetime Memorial Park Plans.

The order will pave the way for the court to determine whether PPI's petition for rehabilitation is moot and academic.

SEC Commission Secretary Ernesto Gonzalez said that the court's June 9 order lays the foundation for the SEC to eventually dismiss PPI's petition for rehabilitation.

This is because Lifetime's assets, should the pre-need firm be folded back into PPI, may be enough to cover for PPI's liabilities.

"You may be looking at a healthy company," Lifetime and Pacific Plans.

PPI earlier asked the Makati RTC to allow it to suspend payments and go through rehabilitation after it claimed it had run out of cash.

Before PPI could submit the financial reports to the court, PPI legal counsel Jesuferto Terence Gonzalez said PPI wanted instead to wait for the SEC to decide on Lifetime's motion asking the regulator to reconsider its revocation order.

SEC earlier revoked Lifetime's certificate of incorporation for failing to comply with requirements to establish itself as a corporation.

Lifetime—which sells fixed value plots—has more than 400,000 plot holders.

PPI has the other hand has 34,000 plot holders. About 10,000 plot holders have filed suits, centered mainly on schedule 2000-2006.

In a supplemental comment, the SEC told the court that since Lifetime no longer exists, the assets of Lifetime now pertain to PPI.

The SEC argued that PPI's petition for rehabilitation should be dismissed for being moot and academic.

Smart promo reels in 1.4M subscribers

By Clarissa S. Batino

SMART Communications Inc. has already lured in 1.4 million subscribers in its unlimited 288 promo launched last March, the company's top official said.

Smart president Napoleon Nazareno said the buckled deal has been boosting the company's revenue.

"We have participated in a new market segment while maintaining the network quality of service for our regular paying subscribers. Smart 288 has enhanced our revenues with increased usage and incremental ones," said Nazareno.

As of end-March, Smart said its unit Pilipino Telephone Corp. counted 20.2 million subscribers.

Nazareno said the plan was to continue the bucket offering and make it a part of Smart and Talk 'N' Text's menu for customers.

The leading wireless companies continue to offer what officials described as a "revised and revitalized" bullet pricing of P1115 for unlimited calls and P900 for unlimited text.

Plan 288 was re-launched on April 21 after Smart made some changes to ensure that the unlimited prepaid traffic would not affect prepaid customers.

To avoid congesting their network, Smart and Piltel have imposed a cap on the lengths of the unlimited calls to network from three minutes during peak hours, and a reduced rate of 10 minutes during off peak hours between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Sun Cellular set off a price war when it launched in October its 24/7 plan that allowed subscribers to call and text within the network numbers from the P288 for 30 days and P1000 for 90 days.

The price of 24/7 is now P288 for 30 days and P500 for seven days. It also sells unlimited text for P68 for seven days and P168 a month.

Globe Telecom Inc. refused to join the unlimited price war and instead cut the cost of its prepaid calls by 50 percent and text by half under a new promo called Celebrate, which was launched on June 12.

For P115, Smart and Talk 'N' Text subscribers could call or text to any network for seven days and text all they want for P60 for four days.

Aside from the cap imposed on calls, Smart and Piltel also cut the length of the bucket package from 30 days for unlimited calls, and 10 days of unlimited text during the initial promo.

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DISCLOSURES

ELECTED directors of International Exchange Bank were Walter St. Brown, Enrique M. Soriano, Gerardo Lamian Jr., Enrique K. Razon Jr., Benito L. Santos, Florencio P. Sy, Wilson L. Sy, Wilfredo C. Tacason, Ben E. Tiu, Herbert C. Tsu and Gregorio T. Yu.

* * *

RATIFIED Demesal Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 23, 9 a.m. at the Manuel V. Pangilinan Building, Makati Avenue, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of June 23 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting.

* * *

APPROVED Savings Bank disclosed that the BSP has approved the company's application for three new branches.

* * *

IPVG Corp. moved the record date of its shortened annual stockholders' meeting from July 5 to July 7.

* * *

ELECTED directors of the Philippine Bank of Communications were Florencio Yuson, Khoon Eong Tay, Limpan T. Lay, Ralph Rufo Jr., Carmelo Maria Luza Bautista, Henry T. Sy, Carlos G. Cheng, Dr. Peng Soo Chiang, Lo Ermelo T. Lay, Johnny O. Gillaokat, J. Antonio M. Solis, Ruben E. Almendras, Ranulfo H. Peñaflor and José Luis S. Alejo.

Compiled by Erika A. Jarandilla, PDS Research

OUTSIDE SUBIC

Gov't sets lifting of tax perks given to ecozone firms

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE GOVERNMENT is set to lift the fiscal incentives enjoyed by Clark and John Hay economic zone locators, which were previously listed to invest with the promise of being granted tax and duty perks.

The Department of Finance has approved a revenue regulation containing a provision clarifying that the fiscal incentives enjoyed by locators in the Subic economic zone do not extend to enterprises located in other economic zones, Therefore, enterprises in Clark and John Hay will no longer be granted tax incentives.

The regulation will be issued next week, publicly known by the Bureau of Internal Revenue in the next few days.

The DOF and the BIR came up with the revenue regulation to abide by an earlier Supreme Court ruling, which stated that the tax incentives granted under RA 7227 were exclusive to enterprises located in the Subic economic.

RA 7227 states that economic zone locators in Subic are only required to pay a 5 percent gross income tax in lieu of all other taxes, and are to enjoy duty-free importation of raw materials and capital equipment.

The Supreme Court gave reasons for the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs to collect multimillion pesos in back taxes and duties from Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevCo). The Camp John Hay developer had contested the collection of the taxes and duties, arguing that the fiscal incentives were part of its agreement with the BCDA, which was then looking for a firm to develop the camp in Baguio.

BCDA and CJHDevCo are also in dispute over some P6 billion worth of unpaid rental fees of the latter, which said it would only service its rent if the BIR would abide by the terms of the agreement regarding the granting of fiscal incentives.

The DOF said the Supreme Court ruling did not only extend to Camp John Hay locators, but also to other locators outside Subic. The revenue regulation will therefore clarify that economic zone locators outside Subic, such as those from Clark and John Hay, are not entitled to tax and duty perks.

The DOF, admitting that economic zone locators were lured to do business in the country with the promise of fiscal incentives, said it was now pushing for a law that will grant tax and duty perks to other economic zone locators outside Subic.

But while Congress has yet to legislate a law granting uniform tax incentives to all economic zone locators, a finance official said, the government should observe the Supreme Court ruling, and therefore should lift the incentives enjoyed by non-Subic locators.

Peso steady at 55.645:$1 . . .

(Story on page B3)

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Meralco to start final phase of ₱30-B refund plan in July

PPA Q1 net hits ₱677M

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINE Ports Authority has managed to increase its profits by 4 percent to P677.8 million in the first quarter, as against the P650 million posted the same time a year ago, despite unfavorable trade terms during the period that dashed its government's cash coffers.

Atty. Jesus Ma. PPA assistant general manager for finance, said that the maritime agency's continuing austerity measures proved vital in cushioning the impact of a 2.6 percent decline in container freight cargo vessels.

Dizon suspected that there were less cargo vessels that docked during the first quarter due to slower economic activity.

The agency's expenses reached only P457 million against P602 million a year ago.

Revenue of the state-run seaport operator and regulator during the first three months stood at P1.133 billion, up only 1.7% percent from the P1.302 billion posted during the same period in 2004.

The bulk of the revenue still came from the Manila ports. It accounted for about 60 percent of the agency's consolidation.

The agency is tasked to operate government-owned ports, fully regulate the maritime industry and put up more ports to improve the flow of goods and services.

The agency is one of the government's biggest revenue earners in terms of fees that it collects from vessels docking in local ports, as well as from cargo port operators.

The PPA organized a one in terms of P1.6 billion in 2004 on revenue of P1.58 billion and P1.62 billion in expenses. Part of the expenses are used to pay financial on loans. The PPA has P7.3 billion in outstanding obligations.

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER several months of delay, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) finally kicked off implementation of the last phase of its P30-billion refund scheme for members.

Commitments after the first phase of the refund scheme may choose between the credit-to-bill option and the post-dated check option, said Jesus Ma. Head of Meralco's refund management task force.

Those who opted for the credit-to-bill option would see their rebates reflected in their July bills, Mallari yesterday said during a telephone interview.

Those who chose the post-dated check option would be able to get their checks by September, Mallari added.

Customers entitled to rebates, however, would have to submit all documentary requirements before their rebates could be processed.

But before Meralco could actually start giving the rebates under Phase 1 of the refund scheme, Mallari said the distribution utility would still have to wait for the Supreme Court to resolve issues of a revenue reconciliation order (RRO) detailing how the firm should withhold profitable revenues from the refunds.

The bill earlier in the year issued an order for Meralco to withhold a 25 percent overbillable income tax on those it considers with active accounts and 32 percent on customers with terminated accounts.

Despite the general order, Mallari said Meralco still had to wait for the SMC's ex-chief would contain the specifics of the tax withholding process.

He said that the Bill last week presented a draft RRO to Meralco, stating similar terms contained in the original order.

Under the draft RRO, he said, customers availing themselves of the refund should have the appropriate tax withheld from their rebates (TIN). As customers falling under the last phase of the refund scheme were mostly commercial and industrial entities, their business registration names should also appear in the name corresponding to the given TIN.

The draft RRO likewise mapped out details on which customers were exempted from the withholding of the overbillable income taxes, as well as how Meralco should handle the exemptions, he said.

"Most customers that have exemptions have the proper documents to prove that they're exempted," he said. "We have to go back to the BIR to get the certified true copy of those documents. For government entities, they will most likely be exempted as consumer enterprises."

He said the BIR would issue the final RRO within the month.

Cebu seismic survey yields viable gas, oil prospects

FORUM Energy Plc, the joint venture firm of Canada's Forum Energy Corp. and the United Kingdom's Sterling Energy Plc, recently completed a 3D seismic survey across Tanon Strait in Cebu, an area believed to contain "promising oil and gas prospects."

According to a statement posted on the company's official website, Forum Energy culled new data from its survey of 3,100 kilometers of Tanon Strait, which is covered by Service Contract 46.

Forum has a 67-percent stake in the project.

Based on earlier estimates made by independent geo-science consultancy firm FGE Reservoir Ltd., reservoirs within the area had combined potential resources of "[One] billion barrels of oil."

The new 3D seismic data gathered from the recently completed survey would be processed by Dublin-base Spectrum Energy over the next three months.

Forum, represented by stockbrokers Nesbitt Jo Co. Ltd., recently raised £3.6 million (around ₱6.2 million) in an international placement, giving the new investors a 20-percent share in the company, and raising the value of the firm to more than ₱37 million (around ₱30.6 million) at the pre-listing stage.

The company is looking at raising another ₱27 million in additional funds to develop oil, gas and coal resources in the country by listing with the share earner Investment Market of the London Stock Exchange.

"We have a strong portfolio of fairly coming production and exploration interests in the Philippines and look forward to becoming a key player in the country's increasingly important energy sector," said David Robinson, Forum chief executive.

The company's Philippine assets include the offshore Sibuti Basin license, Cagayan Basin and Exploration Service Contract (Esc) 102, which contains the Isarangan gas field.

It also has a 67 percent interest in the Libertad onshore gas field in Cebu, as well as two coal operating contracts in Central and Southern Cebu with proven and probable reserves of 4.6 million tons.

Abigail L. Ho

$64M for Metro Manila's sewers

By Boris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD Bank has approved a $64-million loan to improve Metro Manila's sewerage system through the Manila Third Sewerage Project.

The borrower is the Government of Land Bank of the Philippines. It would extend the proceeds to the Metro Manila Sewerage Project.

The borrower is the Government of Land Bank of the Philippines. It would extend the proceeds to the Metro Manila Sewerage Project.

"This project demonstrates effective private public partnership for improved sanitation services ... It will spur pollution reduction and increase coverage and service, among others," said Ismail Sarageldin, vice president, World Bank Philippines country director.

Aside from increasing sewerage coverage and service, the project also hopes to reduce water pollution in Metro Manila, as well as in Laguna de Bay and Manila Bay.

The project also seeks to lessen the risks of the communities coming into contact with sewerage, the World Bank said.

The WB said the project was to support one of the government's goal of decreasing water pollution and damage to the environment and the people's health.

Republic Act No. 9275, or the Clean Water Act, by increasing sewerage coverage from about 6 percent to 20 percent, and sanitation services to 100 percent in the metropolitan area.

In Metro Manila, about 15 percent of the population is connected to a sewerage system, although only half is provided with treatment facility.

Most residents rely on septic tanks, many of which are open, that receive the wastes from their septic tanks.

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BUSINESS

Mindanao exports hit $338M in March

DAVAO CITY—Mindanao, the country's food basket, registered a 12-percent growth in export earnings in the first quarter of the year.

Data from the Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDC) showed that exports as of March hit $360 million, from $338 million in the same period last year.

The report growth came courtesy of the traditional export winners, such as bananas ($79.2 million) and coconut oil ($86 million).

Nickel ore exports also grew from $6 million to $19 million in the first three months.

Non-traditional export products, such as ethyl alcohol and tetanyl alcohol, both used in the cosmetics industry, also boosted export growth with a total export value of $11.5 million.

MEDCo said the bulk of Mindanao's exports went to Japan, which accounted for 25 percent of the island's total shipments.

The United States captured 21 percent of Mindanao's exports valued at $80.7 million, followed by the Netherlands at $22.7 million, South Korea at $21.4 million and Taiwan at $20.1 million.

Presidential Assistant and MEDCo chair Jose Ferrera said the impressive performance of the region only showed its ability to respond to global demands.

"Mindanao continues to show that contrary to public perception, the island produces and delivers, contributing significantly to regional and national growth," Ferrera said.

Mindanao attracted 11 new investments projects last year.

These include projects of Interlink Investors Inc. in the southern region of the island; Philippine Bureau of Micro Foundation Inc., Ampbel Manufacturing Corp., Banlay & Amy Food Corp., Unifrutti Inc Miguel Inc. and Island Trend Shells Exporters.

Ferrera said the double-digit growth in export figure also "indicated that a significant headway was being achieved in investing and sustaining growth in areas within Mindanao that need the added push from the private and public sectors."

He said, however, that Mindanao businesses needed to improve products and production processes, and develop new markets if the island were to sustain its positive economic performance.

"While the initiatives are encouraging, Mindanao needs to further strengthen its key factors, such as improved production processes, and take advantage of expanded trade opportunities provided by the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines-East Asean Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA)," Ferrera said.

He said that aside from the traditional markets, Mindanao should also look into the "Americas" North Asia and China markets. Jeffrey M. Tupas, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

HUAWEI CITY, HUAYA ECIJA. Ramilyn Ramirez tends to Dr. Daniel Aquino, supervising science research specialist at the National Water Buffalo Gene Pool...where a playful carabao in his hand as he monitors them at the Philippine Carabao Center here. The center is a breeding and research facility for the propagation of hybrid water buffalo. AP/ARMI

World Bank sees 'bright spots' among LGUs

MAKATI CITY—The World Bank, through its financing arm, the International Finance Corp. (IFC), is studying the possibility of lending directly to local government units.

Florencio T. Mongaya Jr., chief of the Public Employment Service Office here, said in a recent interview that the IFC team was going around checking the credit standing of some LGUs, which it considers the "bright spots in the Philippines."

Mongaya said the credit investigation was part of the IFC's plan to lend directly to the LGUs, instead of going through the national government channels.

He said the IFC team had observed that some loans extended to the national government failed to comply with the required equity of 20-30 percent of the total cost of the project.

Mongaya said the IFC team had made a list of prospective LGUs, which it would rate according to fiscal management and good issues.

Among the factors to be considered in rating LGUs were budget compliance for 2010 and 2004 and ability to save government resources and generate revenues.

The team declined, however, to identify the LGUs that were likely to get direct loans from the IFC.

Mongaya said one of the available tools packages from IFC here deals with micro-commercial preservation and protection.

Mongaya said the IFC team conducting the credit studies included Marvin Spicer, Melba Balanzat and Sheila Yasmeen Khandam Escandor Jr., *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Transfer of Naia flights to Clark seen in 2012

CLARK (PHILIPPINES) (DOW JONES)—The earliest transfer of international and local flights from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) in Metro Manila to the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport here is expected between 2012 and 2014.

By that time, the runway capacity of the Naia would have reached its limit, according to Benito Ronquillo Francia, president and chief executive officer of the Clark International Airport Corp.

Francia made the prediction during the recent meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Airlines Operations Committee (AAOC).

At least 40 senior executives of major airlines, such as Lufthansa and Continental Airlines, joined the meeting.

"The transition from the Naia to the DMIA would take place, the earliest in 2012 to 2014, when the saturation level of the NAIA is met," he said. "We foresee some of the flights coming to Clark by then."

That prospect became tenuous when the contract of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) for the Naia Terminal 3 barred the use of other passenger terminals like the one in Clark.

The contract is under litigation following the takeover by the government.

Formerly the biggest American military air post in the Asia-Pacific region until 1991, the DMIA was declared by former President Fidel Ramos in 1997 as the "premier international gateway to the Philippines."

Through an executive order by Ramos, at least 2,700 hectares of the airport's 4,400 hectares have been donated to what is now called the "new capital."

Renamed the DMIA, after the late President Diosdado Macapagal, the father of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the airport was prepared to take in more flights as early as three years ago.

DMIA is four times bigger than the NAIA by size.

Low cost airlines now operating in Clark are Air Asia Berhad, Tiger Airways and China Sichuan Airways, which separately serve the Malaysian, Singapore and Hong Kong routes.

The DMIA is also getting to be a favored cargo freight hub, a trend started by UPS. Benedicto Ocampo, *PDI General Luzon Desk*

DA eyes development of idle land in E. Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—The Department of Agriculture (DA) has targeted agribusiness development that may unseed 21,700 hectares of "low used" in Eastern Visayas.

The move is expected to increase food production and generate about 65,000 new jobs in the region.

Leo Caldoza, DA executive director for Eastern Visayas, said about half of the 21,700 hectares represent unused lands that were either idle or underutilized.

He said farmers can either increase or go into aquaculture and livestock integration projects to these idle lands.

Development of idle lands for agribusiness is one of the main goals of the agriculture department, in support of the 10-point agenda of President Maruyagal Arroyo.

"What is included in goal are to our agribusiness plan are coconut and some high value crops, like mango, jackfruit, coffee, cacao, banana and others," he said.

Caldoza said the area was established because the DA was not sure if it could invest in irrigation due to funding constraints.

The other goal is to bring down the cost of crops, goods or basic commodities, such as rice, fish, vegetables, pork, poultry, eggs and corn through productivity enhancement, efficient logistic distribution and improved marketing.

Congressmen and governors in Eastern Visayas have indicated their support to the agribusiness project, which was expected to generate 65,000 new jobs in the region, he said.

Caldoza said the government and DA officials recently signed a memorandum of understanding on "how much they will support the project in terms of counterpart funding support and in terms of level of cooperation through the technical support that they can devote." Ellamarie T. Lallave, *PDI Visayas Bureau*

HEALTHY 'baon' for schoolkids /C2

LIFESTYLE

Editor Cheiko Bacal-Fermoso

The Pizza Company is a treat for jaded pizza eaters

EXTREME Super Deluxe Pizza

Slicing into the pizza market

By Pan Pastor

WHAT do the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Joey Tribbiani from "Friends" and Filipinos have in common?

Their love for pizza.

Statistics show that people in the Philippines consume more pizza than any other Asian nation. Which is why we shouldn't be surprised that there are countless pizza chains all over the country continually thinking up mix-and-match toppings, promos and premises.

The Pizza Company, the leading pizza brand in Thailand for the past four years, believes it can take on the competition.

It recently opened its first branch in Market! Market! and has already won the hearts of many pizza fans.

At the official launch, members of the media enjoyed the pizza buffet where they were also treated to The Pizza Company's different offerings.

But favorites at the event included the Pork BBQ Deluxe (BBQ Pork, Pepperoni, Sliced Bacon, Sliced Ham, Italian Sausage, Green Pepper, Onions, Red and Green Chili), Seafood Explosion (Prawns, Crab Meat, Onions, Pineapple, Tomatoes and Green Pepper) and the Thai-inspired Tom Yung Kung pizza (Prawns, Squid, Chili Paste, Mushrooms).

Other gourmet flavors include Tropical Prawns (Prawns, Pineapple), Prawns and Ham, Seafood Cocktail (Prawns, Crab Stick, Sliced Ham, Pineapple, Thousand Island Sauce), Super Deluxe (Pork, Italian Sausage, Pepperoni, Sliced Ham, Sliced Bacon, Onion, Green Pepper, Mushroom, Pineapple).

Those with simpler tastes would enjoy any of the classic pizzas— Ham and Mushroom,

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Hamburger Steak with Gravy

MELT margarine in a saucepan. Add flour and cook to brown a little para. While stirring, slowly add beef stock.

COOK and slightly thicken while stirring continuously. Season with soy sauce and pepper. Add mushrooms if desired. Mix well and set aside.

MEANWHILE, pan fry beef burgers. Pour sauce on top or on the side of the beef burgers. Serve with plain rice and veggies.

HAMBURGER Steak with Gravy

Floppy Dog Ears

FAN PAT beatings to oil. Set aside.

PREPARE pancake mix according to package directions. Set aside.

PREHEAT a crepe/frying pan. Melt a teaspoonful butter. Pour about 1/3 c of pancake batter on the pan.

WHEN bubbles appear on the surface, sprinkle some grated cheese on top.

PLACE a piece of hotdog in the middle of the pancake.

CAREFULLY roll the pancake to secure hotdog in the middle. Continue to cook over low heat until pancake has set. Serve warm with pancake syrup or ketchup.

FLOPPY Dog Ears

Healthy, easy-to-prepare 'baon'

Text by Virgie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Ruby Espino

IT'S BACK-to-school season, and parents here to start thinking about delicious, nutritious and filling "baon" recipes for their kids.

Although good old peanut butter sandwiches are actually a nutritious lunch or snack choice, many kids tire of the same thing day after day.

"Preparing school snacks for kids can be both exciting and stressful for most parents," says Marivel Rimando, product application specialist of San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center (tel. 4736044).

"But there are many ways to liven up those school lunchboxes, so they don't end up in the trash can."

Here are two back-to-school baon recipes that are not only flavorful, convenient and portable, but also provide valuable nutrients that kids need, parents say and educators.

Hamburger Steak with Delicious Gravy and Hop-on Dog Ears are lunchbox choices that are not only easy to make, but are also fun to eat.

The burger steak is prepared with creamy gravy, which does not spoil easily. The gravy is prepared with margarine, flour, beef stock, soy sauce and pepper. If you want it richer and creamier, add milk. If you have more time on your hands, it's best to toast the flour in a saucepan before mixing it with other ingredients. Beef burgers in supermarkets now come already in patties, so they're easy to cook.

STEP BY STEP

"To add color, accompany the burger steak with veggies cut into smaller pieces. This will motivate your child to like food you cook," says Rimando.

Floppy Dog Ears is another variation of hotdog waffle, which is simply hotdog wrapped in pancake. This snack can be stored in airtight containers or resealable plastic bags.

These burger and hotdog recipes are perfect for field trips, school lunches or after-school snacks. And no matter how you decide to serve them, they are a healthy and frugal alternative to chips, cookies and other store-bought snacks.

Hamburger Steak with Gravy

1 pack Master ice Beef Burgers
2 tbsp Dari Creme Classic
½ c all-purpose flour
1 pc beef bouillon cube, dissolved in
[illegible] c water
2 tsp soy sauce
½ tsp ground black pepper
½ c sliced mushrooms (optional)

Floppy Dog Ears

1 pack Dona Nicole 12 Regular hotdogs
Cooking oil for pan frying
1 (350 g) pack pancake mix (store bought)
½ c Magnolia Gold Butter
½ c Magnolia Quickmelt Cheese, grated

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

Finally, a credit card for all things family – and all things school

It's that time of the year again. No, we're not talking about weddings (see: but school opening. It's no doubt something that parents are not exactly looking forward to – and with good reason. The new ideas of going out east to business school assemblies are right. Mastercard announces a struggle to think anyone crazy. There are books, websites, notebooks, stores (Doesn't home seem endless? It is time about.

With tuition rising each year, stretching your pesos can be quite a challenge. It does not help either that there's always a threat of school increases. So what are parents to do?

Now you can stop stressing over it. PSBank MasterCard has arrived in the NICHING list. Launched on June 15, PSBank MasterCard is one of the few, if not the only family-friendly credit in the country.

The whole concept of offering a card dedicated to answering family needs came from the combined team of MasterCard Corporation and PSBank.

Sheila Santos, Associate Vice President of PSBank says, "PSBank MasterCard was designed with you and your family in mind. It helps you with your family related expenses. It comes with the Family Health Helper that provides the qualified cardholder with economical accident coverage (number) with a hospitalization cash benefit. To qualify, simply accumulate P1,000 worth of purchases. Please (illegible), this new card feature focuses on care for every Filipino family. For us, family matters most."

While it offers standard credit card benefits, PSBank MasterCard also offers family-oriented benefits. One of these is the Family Reward. As (illegible) it entitles you to free movie tickets when you use the PSBank MasterCard for the first time.

Read: cash in a (illegible) for sweets. "Every PSBank MasterCard is Family Ready. Card that gives you access to funds you can use for emergencies or any other need. It comes in handy and is certainly always especially more than expense team approved. By simply adding the newest PSBank or Mabuhay branch and filling out the Ready Cash application form, cardholders can enjoy ready cash within an hour. The best part is that you can pay it back in easy installments.

Ricky Poblador, Executive Vice President for PSBank reveals, "Ahead of the credit cards in the market focus on personal and material satisfaction. We thought that it is high time that we offer a card that's more sensitive to the family's needs." As a (illegible), "Our (illegible) PSBank MasterCard, understands only too well the desires of parents to provide for all the needs of their children. All children." We want to emphasize the importance of managing finances. This is not to say that (illegible) family to take a backseat to school. But with PSBank MasterCard, you can now strike a balance between the two. Size it as a credit card for all things family."

Fulfilling the needs of the family on a tight budget can be a struggle. But with a credit card like PSBank MasterCard around, you can relax on getting all the help you can get in easing your financial concerns.

Apply for one now! Call 8 759 777. If you are an (illegible) or near our toll-free number at 1 800 1888 (illegible) for any inquiries.

Slicing into the pizza . . .

THE PIZZA Company's open kitchen allows diners to watch while their food is being prepared.

TIRAMISU Heaven

BEEF Lasagna

Supreme and the Double Cheese pizzas—that come in three sizes and a choice of pan pizza crust, crispy crust, cheese crust, sausage and cheese crust and triple crust (sausage, cheese and bacon in one crust).

From the most jaded pizza eaters would agree that there really is something different about their pizzas—a smooth gravy and the toppings were extra flavorful and generous. They really do take their catchphrase "Pizza round to Excite" seriously. Their focus on quality is evident. They even hold blind taste tests. "If we don't win, we don't want to serve it," said Wilfredo L. Hontoria, chair of The Pizza Group in Thailand.

No wonder they take pride in the quality of their food. The Pizza Company's general manager Josie L. Sabado said, "We never ever use frozen dough for our pizza. Our highly trained chefs make fresh batches of dough on a daily basis. The Pizza Company uses fine, quality cheese made from fresh milk from the best dairy herds. We cut pizza sauce, we use carefully selected premium juicy red tomatoes blended with herbs and spices for the ultimate pizza sauce. And of course, we use freshly chopped vegetables and premium meat cuts for toppings."

Xavier Sarsama, CEO of Allied Brands International Master Franchising Corporation stressed, "We used fine ingredients to have a fine pizza."

The people behind The Pizza Company want an all-around pleasurable experience for their customers. "Since design evokes visual and has ambiance where friends and family can enjoy a variety of traditional and innovative pizza creations," said Alvin Pelaez, president of Alpha Food Holdings Corp., the Philippine operator of The Pizza Company.

There's more to love about The Pizza Company aside from the pizza appetizers, salads, pasta and desserts. Prices are reasonable—appetizers range from P49 to P95, an order of pasta ranges from P99 to P139 and pizza prices start at P79. (Our fan tasted cheesecake) is P480 [large good for two].

The Pizza Company is located at the second level (just entrance of Market! Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

E-mail the author at pjuico@inquirer.com.ph

BACON and cheese (rib)

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Chinoy and Spanish favorites

THE MEGGE Inquirer School of Culinary Arts will conduct the following classes:

June 24—Everyday Chinoy (all new!)—Crab and Corn Soup, Pata Tim, Bawang-infused Fried Pigeon Chinese style, Kangkong, Lomi, Lumpiang Shanghai, Mixed Achy

June 25—Authentic Tapas—Gambas al Ajillo, Gambas ala Plancha, Salpicao, Tortilla Española, Boquerones, Croquetas (16 delicious tidy dishes, great for entertaining). Inquirer

June 27—My Favorite Easy Baking Recipes (all new!)—Carrot Cake, Rum Cake, Sour Cream Apple Pie, Tuna Pie, Banana Cake, Delicious Spanish Cake

June 29—Pinoy Pang Yuppie Items: (Our 7th Binay Division) Funfun and Carrot Cake), Nonya Fried Chicken and Salted Fish Rice, Hokkien Pancit, Bicolo Pinoy, Rich Pinoy Dessert (Binignit Pudding)

For reservations and inquiries, call 8389206, 9273008, 6325362, 3917 6395MM.

Catering seminar June 24-25

PEOPLE interested in starting a food business can attend the "Catering Seminar," June 24-25, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Maya Kitchen in Makati.

The seminar will cover the legal and technical aspects of starting a catering business, facilities, personnel and menu preparation, including portioning and quantification.

Also included is the actual cooking of popular Filipino and international dishes: Vietnamese Beef Noodle Soup, Baked Spring Rolls, Rolled Stuffed Adobo Style, Roast Stuffed Chicken Thighs with Garlic Gravy, Chinese Guisantes, Vegetable Amiana, Creamed Spinach Soup, Spicy Chicken Wings, Quiche Lorraine, Eggplant Ghanoush. 4 dessert recipes will be included as a bonus.

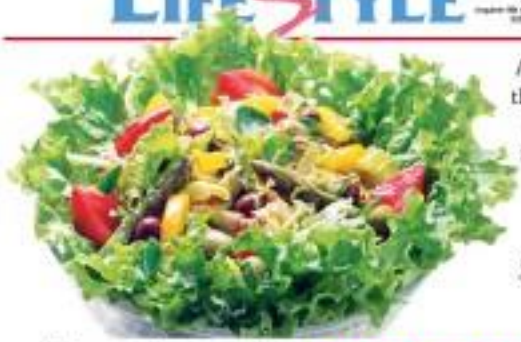
The highlight: get a free "Food Service" catering cookbook.

Meanwhile, learn delicious and mouthwatering chocolate recipes from "Brownies and Bars Galore," June 25, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., which will include Brownie Cheesecake, Dirty Nuts, Sticky Bars, Double Treat, Pretzel Apple Pie, Lemon Meringue Pie and Walnut Pie.

The Maya Kitchen (open Pandan to Sarasate) is at the A/P Gloria Building, E. Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City. Call 8925185 or 8925811 local 3188. E-mail cookschool@philmaya-info.com.ph.

NEW SQUARE DONUT FLAVORS!
Want to try something other than the usual round donuts? Try Country Style's newest Krazy Squares, the country's only square donuts with a hole. It comes in four variants—Triple Peanut Blast, with creamy peanut butter filling, crushed peanut topping and chocolate peanut butter frosting; Choco-Mat, with delicious peanut butter filling, crushed chocolate-peanut topping and chocolate drizzle; Nutty Caramel, with peanut butter filling, crushed chocolate, peanut topping and caramel drizzling; and Rocky Road, with luscious chocolate filling, chocolate frosting and peanuts-and-marshallow topping. Each donut costs only P 18. Visit any Country Style outlets.

LIFESTYLE



Always use the freshest and finest ingredients and add the dressing just before serving

'Dressing up' salads

KITCHEN RESCUE

Maggie Ingles

MANY things excite me, and getting decent food for a song is certainly one of them.

Imagine this, a deli-size platter filled with Steamed Shrimp Dumplings, Steamed Pork Siomai, Fried Taro Puffs, Sesame Balls of Fried Shrimp and Garlic and Seafood Balls enough for six hearty eaters for only P550. Yes, it does exist! I fell off my seat when I saw how huge the platter was. (Chine Haven, Ivory Building, Libis beside Mercury Drug, bearing Eastwood)

Salad bar

I am Celeste, a single mom who opened recently a small cafe in the neighborly Irish area. I would like to ask your help in making a salad bar because clients like salad. Some pa rin yun help me. I really need every income for me and my child. Please include some popular dressings like Thousand Island and Caesar and some new kinds.

I usually try my best to answer as many requests on Kitchen Rescue each week. If I remember right, I never devoted a whole article to just one request but since it's a different topic for you and your child, Celeste, anything! Good luck to you!

Rules for making the perfect salad:

- Soak greens in cold water and vinegar solution (1 gallon water : 1 tsp vinegar) for 5 minutes. Rinse in cold water. Spin dry.
- Refrigerate salad greens.
- Always use the freshest and finest ingredients.
- Use freshly cracked pepper.
- Tenderize salad greens, wash and spin very dry. Wrap in lint zipper bags—looks a mess.
- Only toss dressing before serving.

Salad bar components
(Choose from this list):

- Greens—mixed lettuce, some whole, some chopped/julienned
- Alternates
- Arugula
- Tomatoes, wedged or chopped
- Onions
- Cucumbers
- Carrots
- Beets
- Radishes
- Boiled baby potatoes
- Assorted vegetables—blanched—broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus
- Peppers—bell pepper (fresh or grilled), salad peppers

Gourmet Classes with Chef Dennis Hipolito

July 2, 2005: BREADS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

July 9, 2005: SINFUL CHOCOLATE TREATS

July 16, 2005: DESSERTS FOR ENTERTAINING

July 23, 2005: HOLIDAY BARS & COOKIES

July 30, 2005: SUNSET CAKES

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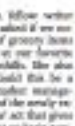
Senior citizens have yet to enjoy grocery discount

Nine basic necessities and prime commoditi
should be cheaper by 5 percent to senior citi



THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

EUPEMIA Estrella, a fellow writer and a senior citizen, asked if we noticed how the prices of grocery items had increased lately at our favorite supermarket in Dasmariñas. She also wanted to know, "Could this be a move by the supermarket management to anticipate the newly expanded senior citizens' act that gives a five-percent discount on basic commodities?"

She added, "Very few people know about the senior citizen discount for basic commodities, which was included in the 2-year-old Expanded Senior Citizen Act of 2003 (Republic Act 9257), but which was only implemented in the media this May."

To avail of the discount at the groceries, however, senior citizens need to present to the cashier an official purchase booklet, issued by the local Office for Senior Citizens Affairs (Osca). The trouble is, for an Ilaw Juan resident, our local Osca has yet to release the booklet.

Estrella said she noticed the higher prices of certain items when she shopped for her groceries at Gaisano last June 8. She cited the price of a 1.36-liter Regular Coca Cola which increased to P49.50, from P46.50. "Even a non-basic product like cheese Bilinis, El Rey brand, now costs P135.50 a pair, up from P115," she said.

We visited the supermarket, as she suggested, to check the prices of grocery items. We also got the comments of other elderly shoppers. Estrella was right—only a few of them knew about the discount. Asked about the privilege and the price hike, one senior citizen pensively remarked, "What the government is giving us with the right hand, private business is taking back with the left hand."

To find the nit, we sought out Gaisano's longtime manager, V.R. Liong, and asked him to comment on Estrella's observation.

"The last price increase for some of our grocery items had nothing to do whatsoever with the forthcoming implementation of the five-percent discount for senior citizens... the price of commodities in our store is determined by price changes set by our suppliers," Liong explained.

In addition, he said the Osca had not yet released the official purchase booklets. To avail of the five-percent discount for prime and basic commodities, senior citizens need to present the Osca identification card with the grocery purchase booklet.

"We value our customers and, if we can help it, we don't want to increase prices. They are welcome to call our customer service hotline at 7233582."

What are the basic grocery items?

We got the following information on the expanded senior citizens act from Tina Tadeo of the consumer welfare desk of the Department of Trade and Industry-Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection (BTRCP):

Every senior citizen (aged 60 years and above) can avail of the special discount of five percent on the price of nine basic necessities and prime commodities. The total discount for purchases shall not exceed the ceiling of P500 per week. If that quota is not used up, the balance is forfeited and cannot be applied to the following week's purchases.

The discount applies to these "basic necessities and prime commodities": canned sardines, tuna; evaporated, condensed and powdered filled milk; coffee; bread; white and brown sugar; cooking oil; instant noodles; powdered, liquid, bar laundry and detergent soap.

Also included are: lanzones, meat, meat loaf, corned beef, Vienna/frankfurter/hotdog/longganisa/ready-to-cook pork, beef and chicken.

Barong is only available at the following retail outlet: supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience and mini-convenience stores; shops, bakeries. Excluded are: sari-sari stores, wet markets, talipapa and cooperative stores.

Delayed bill

A resident of Bagumbong, Manila, is asking Maynilad to act on the delayed delivery of bills. The resident wrote: "This must be the fourth time that my bill was delivered since after payment was supposed to be due. For example, today (May 23), my latest bill from Maynilad was delivered. But the bill said payment was due May 23. How can they be so irresponsible in delivering the bill two days after payment was due?"

Praises for good guys

A frequent taxi rider sent us this note: "How about a good word for this new taxi driver who advises customers to turn off their cellular phone while he is heading anywhere at a stretch? The driver of Sevana taxi did just that, asking me politely to turn off my cell phone as he had his gasoline tank filled. How many people actually remember that the use of cellular phones in gasoline stations may start an explosion or a fire?"

New fruity yogurt flavors

NESTLE 0% Fat Yogurt contains millions of live microorganisms that help improve digestion and promote overall good health. With delectable fruit bits blended in smooth and creamy yogurt, you can feast without guilt because the product is fat-free.

A cup of Nestlé 0% fat Yogurt is ideal for breakfast or snacking in between meals. Enjoy it in strawberry and mango variants. You can also enjoy these fruit flavors in Nestlé 0% fat Yogurt Drink. To stimulate your taste buds, why not try the latest apple kiwi flavor? It contains healthful apple bits with the zing of kiwi.

Available in leading supermarkets and convenience stores nationwide.

TWO AWARD WINNERS

In line with its commitment to offer the best Filipino fast-food dishes, Goldilocks signs popular TV and film star Iza Calzado as product endorser for its Chicken Barbeque. Both the company and the actress have enjoyed a stellar year as: for winning several awards; Goldilocks was named by the Philippine Franchise Association as Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the Year, and was once again recognized as a Filipino Superbrand. Calzado recently won an Urian award for Best Supporting Actress, complementing her Golden Screen Award for performance by an actress. With them are (from left) Estrella of AB Communications; Pinky T. Yu, marketing director of Goldilocks; Calzado; and Priscilla Teodoro of DMA Arnix Center.

NEW ROASTED CHICKEN

Coinciding with its year-long 10th anniversary offerings, Kenny Rogers introduces California Roast. The latest addition to its array of roasted chicken, California Roast is seasoned with herbs and spices such as oregano, paprika, thyme, curry, black pepper and minced onions.

'Dressing up' salads

- Meats/seafood—bacon, chicken, pastrami, etc., sautéed in a little oil
- Eggs—hard-boiled
- Fruits fresh—avocado, mangoes, oranges, cantaloupe, etc.
- Dried fruit—figs, apricots, etc.
- Vegetables grilled—eggplant, zucchini, squash, tomato, onions, etc.
- Processed meats—bacon fried and chopped ham, salami, etc.
- Cheese—goat (queso de cabra), mozzarella, feta, blue, etc.
- Croutons—1/4 cup butter, 1/4 c olive oil, 2 large garlic cloves (pressed), 4 Wonder bread slices, cut into 1/4-inch cubes...toss and bake until crisp
- Olives
- Capers
- Herbs—a few tips
- Add-ons: grilled, roasted, grilled or poached fish, meat, chicken, prawns

Dressings

Ranch
1/4 c mayonnaise
1/4 c sour cream
1/4 c cream
2 tbsp powdered milk
1 tbsp water
1 tsp garlic, chopped
2 tbsp fresh chopped herb/parsley
2 tsp fresh dill or 1/2 tsp dried dill
2 tsp chives, chopped
1/2 tsp fresh lemon juice

1 tsp Dijon mustard
3/4 tsp onion powder
salt and pepper to taste
• Mix/ingredients together

Curry
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1/2 teaspoon minced peeled fresh ginger root
1/4 c cream
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
3/4 tsp curry powder
pepper flakes to taste
2 1/2 tsp sugar to taste
salt and pepper to taste
• Mix top ingredients and blended.

Caesar
2 whole 1 minute eggs (Bring water to a boil and put egg in, cook 1 minute. This loosens tab of salmonella.)

DIH SUM for a song. A piece this big for P150 at China Bistro

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Marella Reynoso Gala
Century Tuna
Panasonic
Gourdo's
MONTERREY

1 garlic clove, pounded
1 tsp anchovy paste
1 tsp mustard
1/4 c olive oil
1 tsp lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste

• Combine ingredients in a bowl except olive oil and lemon juice. Mix well to blend.

• In a slow stream, add olive oil, and mix until thick and emulsified.

• Add lemon juice and season to taste.

Honey Mustard
1 tbsp honey
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tsp sugar or to taste
1/3 c corn oil
salt and pepper to taste

• Whisk honey, vinegar, and mustard in small bowl to blend. Gradually whisk in oil. Season with sugar, salt and pepper to taste.

Thousand Island
1 c mayonnaise
1/3 c ketchup
1 to 2 tablespoons dill pickle relish
1 tsp Tabasco
2 tsp sugar
2 tbsp pimientos, chopped
1 hard-boiled egg, finely chopped
3 tbsp pickles
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp chopped green onion

• Mix ingredients to combine.

Vinaigrette (use as is, or as a base to add other ingredients to)
2 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
6 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

• Whisk the mustard and the red wine together in a bowl. Slowly whisk in the oil until the mixture is thickened. Taste for seasoning. To thin the vinaigrette, add water.

• Variations: Add minced shallot or garlic, minced fresh herbs, lemon zest and juice, cracked black pepper.

• You can replace olive oil with other types of oil, i.e. walnut, garlic, citrus.

• Experiment with other vinegars, white wine, raspberry vinegar, etc.

Fruit-based Vinaigrette
1 1/2 tbsp white wine vinegar
3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsp fruit preserves of choice (jam or jelly)
salt, pepper and sugar to taste

• Whisk ingredients together to emulsify.

My cooking class schedules for July and August are now available. Call 6260200 for inquiries.

For questions and comments, mail 0917 6500600.